

SPACE, KINSHIP AND GENDER:
THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF PEASANT ARCHITECTURE IN PALESTINE

by

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DECLARATION

No portion of the work referred to in this thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institution of learning. Both the fieldwork and the writing of the thesis have been done by the undersigned.

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ABSTRACT

Space, Kinship and Gender: The Social Dimension of Peasant Architecture in Palestine

This thesis addresses itself to the spatial organisation of the different environmental levels in late nineteenth century rural Palestine. A descending spatial order of analysis from the settlement level to that of the furniture level is adopted. The built space of Deir Ghassaneh, a Palestinian village located in the central highlands--the West Bank today--is the focus of this work. In order to understand the close correspondence between this built space and the social organisation of the peasant community that produced it, it was necessary to reconstruct life in Deir Ghassaneh at the turn of this century, at a time when space and society together constituted a single socio-spatial whole, and when the village was a relatively autarkic, subsistence-based agrarian community in which traditional modes -including architecture- still prevailed.

Throughout the thesis, the analysis of the different elements which constituted the village built space is interpreted in the light of the overarching conceptual framework of separation and unity. It is argued that these two countervailing notions governed the nature of interaction between the dominant Barghouthi clans and the subordinate fallaheen (peasant) clans. It also governed the spatial ordering of each element and the ordering of the environment as a whole. Kinship and gender are seen as two main determinants along which village social life and spatial order was organised.

Part two of this thesis examines the nature of change that took place in the built space of Deir Ghassaneh in the light of the dramatic social transformations during the last seventy years (1916-1986). It is argued that architectural systems, i.e., new methods of construction, the use of new building materials, and the adoption of new building forms, would not be accepted by traditional peasant society unless this society was exposed to external forces that operated to undermine the conditions of its existence both at the symbolic-cultural and material levels. In the case of Deir Ghassaneh,

changes in the architectural forms and the spatial organisation reflected changes that took place in the socio-economic structure first, and were then reflected, either in the partial continuity or in the complete disruption of traditional architectural processes.

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The basic theme of this thesis originated some years ago with the stimulating discussions I had with my friends and colleagues Jan Cejka and Bilal Hammad about indigenous architecture. The trips we took together around the Middle East and Europe shaped my interest in the subject. In September 1981, I crossed the River Jordan to visit a number of villages in the occupied West Bank. I was overwhelmed by the architectural qualities I found, and I decided then to spend six months in the area so as to study the architecture of the Palestinian village. Today, six years later, I realize that what is written here is just the beginning.

It would not be possible to adequately thank the people of the village of Deir Ghassaneh who spared long hours of their time talking to me about their history, way of life, and the uses of their spaces, subjects about which I knew very little. I particularly want to thank the elders for their patience with my endless inquisitive questions; and the women of Deir Ghassaneh who tolerated with indulgence my snooping into their private and personal lives. I will always remember with fondness their hospitality and curiosity. Talking to the elders of Deir Ghassaneh, who carried me vividly into their past memories, was the most enjoyable part of the work, and without them the work would not have been possible.

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Penny Johnson read through and helped edit the thesis with diligence

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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is twofold. In part one, it attempts to shed some light on the spatial organization of the different environmental levels in nineteenth century rural Palestine, from the settlements level to the lowest environmental level, that of furniture and objects (Norberg-Schulz, 1971). Part two addresses itself to the relationship between the built environment and social change in rural society.

Deir Ghassaneh, a Palestinian village located in the central highlands - the West Bank today - is the focus of this work. I have attempted to examine the relationship between the village built environment and the social organization of the peasant community that produced it. In part one, the main part of the thesis, I attempted to reconstruct village life as it was at the turn of this century, at a time when the village of Deir Ghassaneh, like most other highland villages, was a relatively autarkic, self-contained agrarian community in which traditional modes still prevailed.

In this section, Palestinian village architecture is examined in the context of its relationship to the social structure of the village community both at the socio-economic and cultural-symbolic levels. The built environment is treated here simultaneously as a historic product of a specific social order and also as an instrument which regulated social reproduction and reinforced social cohesion. The built environment here functioned as both a coordinator as well as a conditioner of a certain social order. The use of traditional architecture is seen in the context of the general use of tradition in fostering the group's continuity and renewal.

In part two, I discuss how the exposure of the country as a whole, as well as Deir Ghassaneh, to western penetration challenged the village's traditional patterns and tended to undermine its fundamental signification. The built environment is examined again in the light of the critical social change that took place in the last half century.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to go beyond the static analysis of typological classification or the purely morphological approach, I have aimed at developing a conceptual system of analysis which treats the various aspects of the community (kinship relations, gender segregation, land tenure, and belief systems) and examines their relationship to the built environment. In this work, I adopt a holistic approach whereby a hierarchy of socio-cultural factors are seen as determinants in ordering the built environment. It is argued that different environmental levels were governed by different variables. The complexity of interactions of many variables often made the selection of one determinant a difficult task. For example at the quarter level (el-harah) it was kinship more than any other factor that determined the formation of clan-based domains. However, kinship was almost certainly not the determining factor in shaping the built environment at the settlement level where a concentration of ecological and putative factors had the upper hand.

I therefore reject both the formalistic approach which sees vernacular architecture as objects d'art isolated from a specific cultural context and the approach which puts undue emphasis on the criticality of the physical aspects of architecture (need for shelter, climate, material, technology, etc.). The former is best exemplified in the work of B. Rudofsky, Architecture without Architects (1964), and the latter in F. Rugette, Architecture in Lebanon (1974). Such approaches have failed in my view to explain how a built form occurs and why it has a particular shape or pattern of organisation. The physical approach also underrates the 'significance' or 'meaning' that buildings or places come to acquire. It ignores the relation between a people's world view, the ordering of their lives, and consequently the ordering of their environment. Furthermore this study is neither chronological nor classificatory in nature.

The thesis deals with spaces at a level beyond their utilitarian usages or their technological constraints, at a level which allows for symbolic interpretations, and aiming at observing the built

form as a 'microcosm' of the community (see chapter 5).

Throughout I have given special emphasis to the events that took place in the different spatial configurations which made up the village structures (houses, courtyards, quarter, village plaza, mosque, and guest-house). By doing so, the static geometric aspects of these elements are given life and character. The quality of space acquires meaning through the "pattern of events" observed (Alexander, 1979:55), the occurrence of the event, participation and exclusion in the event, and cultural rules governing the event. For example the spatial quality of the village plaza (saha) and guest-house (madafah) was not only defined by the plan and the architectural articulation of the buildings around it, but more crucially by the everyday events and the ceremonial occasions that took place in them. It was through these patterns that places came to have their meanings and character.

Throughout this analysis, both spaces and the events associated with them are seen as culture-bound and governed by the principles of congruence and exclusion. Cultural schemes determined spatial forms and the pattern of events which occurred in a place. A good illustration of this determination can be seen in the location of the village mosque and the orientation of the mihrab (praying niche) within it, where both elements must be congruent with the intended action of prayer. It was the fallah's (peasant's) relationship to God and his conception of the world of the beyond that dictated both geometric qualities and events which took place in the mosque.

The physical spatial quality of a place not only supports the intended event but also excludes the undesired. For example the well-defined boundaries of the saha (plaza), its location next to the sheikh's house and village mosque, its controlled or limited access, the sharp boundaries separating it from the dwellings of the dominant clan (the Barghouthis), all supported and were congruent with the events that were associated with it. It will be clear from my analysis that I do not consider that the geometric qualities of any environment as having a causal relation to events, i.e., spatial qualities do not cause specific events to happen.

Throughout the thesis, the analysis of the different elements which constituted the village built environment is interpreted in the light of the overarching conceptual framework of separation and unity. It is argued that these two countervailing laws governed the spatial order of each element and also the relationships amongst the elements, i.e., the ordering of the environment as a whole. Kinship and gender are seen as two main determinants along which the village social life and spatial order was organized. Kinship played a determining role in dividing up the village area into clan-based domains and the division of the village fields into clan-based blocks. Segregation between men and women resulted in the creation of separate male and female domains. Spaces such as the house, the courtyard, the spring, the holy shrines and the tawabin (baking ovens) were all associated with women, while others such as the village fields, the saha (plaza), the village guest-house, and the village mosque were associated with men.

In contrast to kinship-based separation, certain special elements such as the village mosque, plaza and spring cut across partially or totally all kinship lines, while gender segregation was an all-pervasive element in spatial segmentation at the village level. The concepts of separation and unity dictated the choice of spatial units analysed in the following chapters .

ORGANISATION

The organisation of the thesis reflects a descending spatial order of analysis from the settlements level to that of furniture. Chapter one begins with an overview of patterns of settlements in nineteenth century Palestine. It compares the discontinuity and fluctuation in area and population of the lowland settlements with the stability and continuity which characterised the highland settlements. Scarcity of arable land, peasant-nomad conflicts, and topographical factors are seen as determinant factors influencing the dispersion of rural settlements in the period under consideration.

Chapter two places the village of Deir Ghassaneh in the context of

its social geography. It examines the Sheikhdum of Bani Zaid, one of the twenty-one principalities that constituted the districts of the central highlands in the nineteenth century. The relationship between the twenty Bani Zaid villages and the dominant role of Deir Ghassaneh is examined.

Chapter three introduces the village of Deir Ghassaneh, the focus of this study. The historical background and the social organization and social hierarchical order between the dominant Barghouthi clans and other subordinate groups, provide the necessary setting to the more detailed study of the spatial organisation of the village.

Chapter four introduces the strictly spatial analysis of this thesis. After a discussion of the governing rules of separation and unity, the three main living quarters (harat): the Barghouthi quarter, the Shu'aibi quarter, and the lower quarter are discussed at length. The dwellings of the dominant Barghouthis and the subordinate fallaheen are analyzed. An account of the communal and ritual aspects of house construction is also given in this chapter. This section leads directly to a related theme which deals with the symbolic meanings attached to some "decorative" elements: Koranic verses, and floral and faunal designs.

In chapter five two of the village's spatial features (the village plaza and the guest-house) that transcended kinship lines and articulated the village's ultimate unity are discussed in detail. The two places together functioned as the focal point or centre of the village as a whole. As they 'gathered' the different village components around them, they gained a multiplicity of meanings.

Chapter six looks at the sacred environment of Deir Ghassaneh, defined here as the totality of place, time and the ceremonial. The sacred environment acted as an egalitarian force uniting this exclusively muslim village community with the "community of the faithful" at large (ummat al-muslimeen).

Part two of this thesis examines the process of transformation and change that took ^{place} in the village of Deir Ghassaneh in the last seventy

years (1916- 1986). In this part, I argue that changes in the traditional architectural forms and spatial organisation reflected changes that took place in the socio-economic structure first and were then reflected in the partial continuity or complete disruption of traditional patterns, which included traditional architectural processes.

METHODOLOGY AND PRIMARY SOURCES

The study is based on fieldwork undertaken in the village of Deir Ghassaneh and its hinterland from March to August 1982 and from July 1984 to September 1986. For most of the period I was commuting to the village from the district centre of Ramallah, except for the winter of 1985 and spring 1986 when I established residence in the village and spent considerable time there. My field work was based on two types of investigation: First, photographic documentation and physical surveying and measurements of buildings (which have survived, mostly in delapidated form, from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, i.e., from the early to the late Ottoman periods); and second, in-depth interviews with elderly residents of the village. In my interviews, I was racing with the death or approaching senility of several interviewees since my main informants were those few who could still remember the end of the Ottoman era (1917). One of my most important informants, Abu Zuhair, the son of the last sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh, passed away in early 1986 at the age of ninety three just before I was able to conclude my interviews with him.

The reconstruction of daily life as it existed seventy years ago in a village like Deir Ghassaneh suffers from the multitude of problems which face most oral historians of rural communities (Swedenburg, 1985). In general, I was faced with fading memories, projections backward from the present, intentional distortion motivated by the search for social prestige and the disguise of what were seen as unbecoming backward traditions. Above all, I had immense difficulties with the periodisation of patterns and events, as well as with the dating of buildings and other environmental

features. The lack of village records and the absence of material evidence (such as dated stone inscriptions) and the very restricted methods of dating available for me often caused blurring of the reconstructed picture. A related problem was the continuous overlap of reconstructed perspectives into later or earlier periods. I was able to confront this problem only by the most rigorous checking and double-checking of reconstructions of events, periods and memories of daily occurrences.

A different problem of oral history can be traced to distortions caused by interfactional rivalry between the Barghouthi clans and their opponents, the fallaheen. Since the high status of the former has been reduced today to that of equality with the fallaheen, there was a clear tendency to overemphasize their past glory in matters related to living conditions and behaviour, as well as debasing the conditions which prevailed in the peasant quarters. Understanding the difference in status and role between the Barghouthi and fallaheen women remained the most problematic task. In this context, I had to tread with the utmost caution.

Unfortunately, vernacular architecture in rural Palestine is a neglected area for research. The one exception is the valuable work of the folklorist Tawfiq Cana'an, "The Palestinian Arab House: Its Architecture and Folklore" (1932, 1933), which has an excellent detailed treatment of the technical and constructional aspects of the Palestinian house, discussing both building materials and the folkloric aspects of house construction. I have made extensive use of this work as well as Cana'an's other works on Palestinian folklore (Cana'an, 1927, 1928, 1934, 1935). Mention should be made also of the fragmented discussions on Palestinian peasant habitat which appear in the works of early ethnographers and Biblical scholars of the period. The most important among these are Dalman (1942), Wilson (1906), Bladensberger (1913) and Grant (1921). Most of these works were inspired by an attempt to trace Biblical parallels in the lives of contemporary Palestinian peasants. Perhaps with the exception of Dalman and the valuable works of Helma Granqvist on marriage conditions in the village of Artas (1931, 1935) all suffer from distortions caused by this prejudice.

Special mention must be made of the unpublished autobiography of Omar Saleh el-Barghouthi, to which I fortunately had access. This is the only surviving written narrative on Deir Ghassaneh, more specifically, on the Barghouthis themselves. Though it is boastful, this lively autobiography provided valuable material.

I should make it clear to the reader that my study of the Palestinian built form is anthropological and not instrumental (technical) in conception. From the perspective of architectural theory I employed a rather eclectic approach which benefitted from the insights of writers on indigenous architecture (Norberg-Schulz, Alexander, Rapoport, and H. Fathy) and from Lynch's notions on the fundamental properties of space, structure and "legibility"--but always in a manner which allowed an interplay between concepts borrowed from the social sciences with those derived from architecture.

Finally, all thesis drawings and photographs are my own unless referenced otherwise.

CHAPTER ONE

PATTERNS OF SETTLEMENTS IN RURAL PALESTINE

This chapter discusses patterns of rural settlements in nineteenth century Palestine. Factors which, at one point or another, determined the dispersion of Arab settlements in the different parts of Palestine will be examined. The general features of central highland villages, i.e., setting of villages, interaction between villages, size of villages, land holdings, relations of agricultural production and cropping arrangements, are looked at closely in order to discover characteristics which seem to have been common to highland villages.

The period under discussion, nineteenth century Palestine, is of interest to us because it preceded the transformation of Palestinian rural society from a relatively autarkic, inwardly-oriented society, to one which was at least partially integrated into the world's economy. Traditional patterns were still unchanged by western influence. Later, this influence tended to shatter the society's fundamental identity, and resulted in the decline of the traditional social order and the crystallisation of new social forms of existence.

However, any attempt to reconstruct the picture of nineteenth century rural Palestinian society and settlements is faced with two major problems: 1) The rapid rate of change in the physical environment that has taken place in the last 100 years; 2) the lack of systematic information on the conditions of settlements prior to the Survey of Western Palestine, conducted by the Palestine Exploration Fund in the 1870s, and the limited sources of information on the social and economic conditions of rural settlements during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The drastic changes that took place in the last hundred years are best demonstrated by a comparison of the 1875 map of the Survey and that of today (Fig.1.1 and 1.2). This radical transformation in the physical environment has been a reflection of unusual political, social and demographic changes. The colonisation of Palestine by

both the Turks and the British, in particular the latter, contributed to this change. However, the most crucial factor was, and still is, the impact of Jewish colonial settlements commencing in 1882 and continuing until today.

These changes can be summarized by listing major events which resulted in changes in aspects of the physical surface of certain areas, and the erasing of almost all features of nineteenth century Arab Palestine in areas such as the coastal plain.

1882 onwards: The beginning of a continuing process of establishing Jewish settlements in Palestine (Fig. 1.3).

1900 onwards: The "success" of the prevailing government's ability to control the Bedouin community and hence the curbing of Bedouin raids on villages. The provision of security (in favour of peasants) allowed for the spread of sedentary settlements into formerly Bedouin domains.

1917- 1948: Rapid growth of Jewish settlements and a general westward movement of important urban centres and rural population, both Jewish and Arab (Migdal, 1980: 2-31).

1948 - 1952: The establishment of the Jewish State of Israel and the growth of Israeli Jewish settlements. Eastward flight of Palestinian refugees, and a decline in Arab urban and rural settlements. The eradication of approximately 410 Arab villages inside the state of Israel (Fig. 1.4).

1952 - 1967: More Jewish settlements in Israel. Urbanisation and growth of east urban centres. An increase in Arab villages in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. An increase of 50% (132) in the number of Arab villages on the West Bank: villages in the Jerusalem and Hebron districts increased by 144% and those in the Nablus area by 25% (Efrat, 1977: 99). More Arab villages in

the Gaza Strip. The appearance of nineteen refugee camps on the West Bank. The appearance of seven refugee camps in the Gaza Strip (Fig. 1.5).

1967 - The establishment of Jewish colonial settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip (Fig. 1.6) as a result of the Israeli occupation of both the West Bank and Gaza Strip in June 1967.

As I have already argued above, such a tremendous change in the physical environment obscures the picture of nineteenth century Palestine, and hence makes our understanding of the indigenous Arab settlements more difficult.

SETTLEMENTS IN NINETEENTH CENTURY PALESTINE

Nineteenth century Palestine included three types of human settlements: towns, villages and nomadic encampments. While town dwellers (ahl al-muddun) combined their mercantile-artisan base with subsidiary agricultural activities, village dwellers were primarily tillers (literally fallaheen) for whom cultivation constituted the basis of livelihood. Palestinian Bedouin were semi-nomads who depended mostly on grazing and animal husbandry but undertook a considerable amount of seasonal cultivation. During the period under consideration, there was a substantial amount of overlapping in the three categories of townsmen, peasants, and Bedouin. This overlap was true of both the origins and the contemporary realities of these groups. For example, the aristocratic Jarrar family of the town of Nablus traced their origins to the peasants of Sanur within living memory: while the peasant inhabitants of Dahriyyeh and Samu' villages (in the Hebron mountains) continued to lead a semi-nomadic existence for several decades into the twentieth century.

In general, patterns of human settlement in the different geographical parts of Palestine were affected by:

- the life pattern of the inhabitants, i.e., sedentary or semi-

nomadic, the relationship of these communities to one another, the socio-economic ordering of these societies and their religion and norms.

- the physical limitations imposed upon the inhabitants (e.g. the aridity of the southern slopes of the Hebron mountains resulted in the dispersion of villages).

- the exposure of the different areas to external forces (e.g. the exposure of coastal villages to foreign invasions resulted in cycles of destruction and expansion).

Factors such as general conditions of security and interaction between the different communities - nomads, peasants and urban dwellers - all played a part in the expansion, contraction or destruction of areas of settlement. These factors were also crucial in the formation and siting of individual settlements. During the 19th century, Palestine was inhabited by two Arab communities which differed fundamentally in their patterns of life, and in the economic basis of their subsistence. These two communities also differed in the types and patterns of settlement in which they resided.

On the one hand, there was the Bedouin community which lived a semi-nomadic existence. They tended to occupy the more arid areas of Palestine and had a more temporary and mobile type of settlement based on nomadic tent encampments. On the other hand, there was a stable sedentary community which consisted primarily of peasants occupying hundreds of autonomous villages. These villages were partly located in the coastal plain, but the majority were located in the highlands. The sedentary communities also included a semi-urban population which occupied about ten towns located both in the lowlands and the highlands. It is convenient to divide Palestine into three areas based on the communities' pattern of social organisation and their type of settlements:

- Semi-nomadic areas. These included the Naqqab desert (core of the Bedouin) the Judean desert, the Jordan Valley, the Jezreel

Valley, the Hula, Baisan, and Haifa sub-district, western parts of the central plain (Sharon plain) and lower Galilee (Fig. 1.7).

- Sedentary areas. These included the costal plain, the peasant highlands (the Galilee, Nablus, Jerusalem and Hebron mountains) and the town of Jericho in the Jordan Valley.

- Peripheral semi-nomadic and sedentary areas. These were juxtapositions of lowland-highland areas: the southern, western and northern slopes of the central highlands, the southern slopes of lower Galilee and the Hula Valley (after 1835), and the Haifa sub-district.

Since the focus of this chapter is on sedentary rural settlements, the first and third categories (semi-nomadic and peripheral areas) will be discussed only in relation to rural sedentary settlements or, in other words, in terms of how the presence of Bedouin communities influenced rural settlements.

THE BEDOUIN-PEASANT RELATION

Only those aspects of Bedouin life that influenced peasant settlements will be considered at length here. Even though the Bedouin in Palestine have always been a relatively small proportion of the total population, 7% in 1922 (Barron, 1923: 4), 6.4% in 1931 (Miles, 1933: 330), and 1% in 1961 (Mushav, 1956: 265-380, and Amiran, 1963: 247), one should not underestimate their influence in the history of sedentary settlements up to the turn of this century.

Unlike the Bedouin in Syria and Arabia who tended to roam with their herds and animals and cover a large area, the Bedouin of Palestine had a base to which they always returned. Areas of influence and control were very well defined among the Bedouin tribes. The Naqab area was inhabited by three tribes: Tayayha, Al-Azazmeh and the Tarabin. Each of these tribes had a well defined area over which it had complete sovereignty and control. Protection tax (khuweh), had to be paid to the sheikh of the tribe before any

traveller or individual from other tribes was allowed to pass. In contrast to the Bedouin of Naqab, Bedouin tribes in other sub-districts were relatively small groups and had less power (Barron, 1923: 37). By the beginning of the nineteenth century, very few Bedouin in Palestine were purely nomads (Graham-Brown, 1980: 84). They began to cultivate the land and became semi-nomadic. Even though Bedouin life still depended to a degree on pastoral land where he raised his goat and sheep herds, he also cultivated the land by planting mainly barley, wheat and sesame. Agriculture was based on moving from one land parcel to another. Once the parcel was exhausted, the Bedouin moved on and used another; he did not take care of the land by using fertilisers, or crop rotation.

The differences in the way of life, as well as in the fundamental economic and social organisation between Bedouin society and that of the fallah, resulted in the absence of conflict over the same resources such as land and water. In principle the two communities tended to occupy different geographic areas. In Tent Work in Palestine, Conder describes these areas thus:

"the narrow peninsula of cultivated hills in which the settled population lives is surrounded by a broad sea of desert, over which the Arab (i.e. Bedouin) delights to roam" (Conder, 1878: 271).

For the Bedouin leading a semi-nomadic life with relatively great mobility, arid and semi-arid zones provided an environment suited to his way of life. The Naqab desert provided him with a more ideal situation because it was much bigger and drier than an areas which were often swampy and malarial.

The desert for the Bedouin was a symbol of freedom, while the walls of the city or the compact and densely clustered houses in villages were stifling and limiting atmospheres. The Bedouin encampments were usually spread out. Each tent or group of tents were set 200-300 metres apart (Conder, 1878: 275). Unlike the fallah's villages, these encampments were never located on a hill. They were always concealed in the mountain foothills to protect them both from winds and from the raids of other Bedouin tribes. The Bedouin's contempt for the peasant's life meant he was not prepared to forsake the

desert for village life. The numerous failed attempts by central governments to settle the Bedouin in many parts of the world are testimony to the Bedouin's deep love for his freedom manifested also in his attachment to beit esh-sha'ar (goat hair tents) dispersed in the open. The fallah on the other hand, found in the mountain areas an environment which provided him with relatively fertile land, water and protected settings, hence a continuous and stable community. For him the mountainous areas were places where he could most trust the environment. The mountain also provided protection from the exactions of the central regime, as opposed to the more exposed coastal villages.

When one looks at figure 1.8 illustrating the location of nomadic encampments and the fallah's villages at the end of the nineteenth century, one notices a well-defined separation between the two. However, it was the fertile area between the two ecological zones, i.e., the area between the mountain foothills and the plains which witnessed many of the encounters between the two groups. This fertile "peripheral" land which acted as a buffer zone created a continuous tension between the two, a tension that could become overtly hostile.

In general, the "peripheral strip" could be described as the area between the mountain foothills and the plains. Most of these areas are located at about 150 meters above sea level. Some of the country's most fertile lands lies in these parts. In them the fallah saw a good potential for an additional resource to improve his livelihood. Unlike the small, rocky and mostly steep parcels he had to cultivate in the mountainous areas, the peripheral strip provided large, flat and fertile land, easy to work. The Bedouin also saw in these peripheral areas when they were cultivated by the fallah, an additional asset, an easy arena for his raids. It was this cultivated lowland in the peripheral areas that Bedouin mostly targeted for their sudden raids (ghazzu).

One has to bear in mind that the main purpose of the ghazzu was to acquire the agricultural crops of the fallah. When attacking, the Bedouin was careful not to shed blood and cause useless blood feuds

(tha'r, or blood revenge, is obligatory on relatives of the slain to the fifth degree of kinship, (Parkes, 1949: 142)). This explains why the ghazzu was not always an organized military attack but rather an act of theft. A few Bedouin would creep into the fallah's fields and try to steal his agricultural produce or his animals and disappear unnoticed if possible. They were not always successful and disputes between the two did arise. There were also major attacks which the Bedouin undertook against villages or even towns such as the attack of the Bedouin on Hebron, Nablus and Jerusalem in the 1840s (ibid.).

The pattern and frequency of raids were dependent upon several factors: the provision of security by the central government was a key element, so were geographic proximity, alliances forged by the fallah to protect himself, and climatic conditions. Hardships resulting from bad climatic conditions, such as droughts, made Bedouin sporadic cultivation almost impossible. This obviously threatened the Bedouin livelihood and made their raids more frequent.

In the absence of government control and authority, and in order to protect himself from Bedouin raids, the fallah often resorted to alliances with different groups. We know of alliances between different villages, between village and powerful urban centre, and with influential urban notables. In some cases the fallah took refuge within the city walls. Such was the case for many villagers who worked the lands around Jerusalem. In many instances, the fallah saw his security in allying himself with the enemy. Villages in the Bethlehem area allied themselves with the Ta'amra Bedouin tribe, as did the peasants of the Jordan Valley. In such cases, the fallah often paid annual dues (khuweh) in exchange for protection. In other instances, the fallah was protected and allowed to cultivate tracts of lands which were under Bedouin control.

INFLUENCE ON SEDENTARY SETTLEMENTS

Obviously the proximity to Bedouin encampments had a significant influence on the pattern of sedentary settlements. As I have already mentioned, "peripheral strips" were mostly affected by

Bedouin raids. Sedentary settlements in these areas were characterised by:

- Oscillation of the borders of the settled areas
- A high percentage of abandoned sites and villages (khirab)
- A large number of temporary or secondary settlements
- Villages bordering the peripheral zones were usually larger both in their population, and in the area of their lands.

Both the western slopes of the Hebron mountains and the Hula Valley are good illustrations of the oscillation of the borders peripheral zones.

In the case of the western slopes of the Hebron mountains one could perhaps argue that the provision of security, (i.e., the curbing of Bedouin raids) seemed to be the only major factor which limited the southern and western expansion of sedentary settlements; no other factor is evident. Figure 1.9 shows how the majority of new settlements in the Hebron mountains occurred in the western and southern slopes.

The Hula Valley is another example where there was oscillation of the borders of settled areas. In this case it is not clear whether it was the threat of Bedouin raids or the presence of malarial swamps that prevented the establishment of primary sedentary settlements in the valley. In 1806, Seetzen described the Hula Valley as a Bedouin domain of the Bani Fadel and Nu'aim tribes (Karmon, 1953: 7). The Bedouin occupied the Hula Valley during the winter planted corn and raised and grazed their herds. In summer they would move to the Golan Heights. This made it possible for the peasants to come down from the hills to grow their summer crops. Often the fallah built small hamlets or temporary settlements which they deserted once the Bedouin returned:

"The wave of nomadic life is constantly lapping against the mountains of the Fallaheen. This wave has its ebbs and flows which even in the last five years has been very marked"
(Conder, 1878: 271).

Figure 1.10 illustrates the percentage of villages deserted between the end of the sixteenth and the end of the nineteenth centuries. We notice that the peripheral strip and areas under Bedouin control had a high percentage (26% - 50%) of deserted areas, while the highlands had only 9% deserted villages. Amiran demonstrates that while the proportion of uninhabited to inhabited sites in Palestine in 1922 was 2.6:1, it was 5.9:1 in the Shephela (western slopes of the Hebron mountains):

"The Shephela has more than three times as many abandoned sites as the average area of Palestine" (Amiran, 1953; p. 207) .

The size of villages and village land holdings in the peripheral strip was much larger than that of villages in the interior of settled areas. The average of the village population in 1922 in the Hebron areas was 1118; compared to 449 persons in the Nablus area (Barron, 1923: 4).

The largest five villages in the country -Tubas, Dura, Yatta, es-Samu, and ed-Dhahirieh- were located along the southern and eastern frontiers. These villages were the largest in both area and population (Amiran, 1953: 7).

The word khirab (pl. of khirbeh) refers to both abandoned ancient sites and temporary settlements. Khirab in the context of this work refers to temporary settlements. Unlike the permanent peasant villages which had a compact and close layout, the khirab had widely spaced houses. They varied in size from watchman towers to small villages, though most were made up of a few mud huts.

The majority of khirab were populated only during agricultural seasons, harvest and sowing times. Very often fields were distant from their villages. As a result, villagers were more likely to spend the night in their fields, and hence they built humble mud or stone houses (kusor, manatir or 'amarat) in which they retreated for a few days. These structures were also used to store agricultural products. Not all khirab remained as seasonal settlements. Many developed into permanent settlements or even into big villages if

security conditions permitted. Sometimes the khirab were inhabited by watchmen or shepherds who brought their families to live with them; this is one way in which some khirab came to be permanent settlements. In other cases, one or two families, or a clan in a mother village, would leave their village to settle permanently in the khirbeh. This split from the mother village could be caused by village disputes. The case of Khirbet Abu Falah in the Ramallah district is an example. A village dispute took place in the mother village (el-Mazra'a esh-Sharkiyeh) and resulted in the abandonment of the village by two clans, Jardat and Shuman. These moved to an existing khirbeh and developed it as a permanent village (mukhtar of Abu Fallah, interview: 1982).

Relations between the satellite villages and the mother village differed. In some cases, the khirbeh remained as a satellite having strong ties to its mother village, though gradually becoming an independent village. In the cases where the creation of the khirbeh was a result of family or clan disputes, the khirbeh tended to break all relations with the mother village. The khirbeh would elect its own headman (mukhtar), and would have its own lands which had to be agreed on with the mother village, either peacefully or through disputes, as occurred in the case of Khirbet Abu Falah.

In general, as security conditions deteriorated, the khirab, especially those located in the peripheral areas, were deserted. Mountain peasants who had their khirab in the plains tended to retreat to their mountain settlements. Also plain peasants took refuge in mountainous areas and kept their contact with their fields in the plains.

DECLINING IMPACT OF BEDOUIN

Up to the second half of the nineteenth century, the Ottoman Government's authority was hardly felt in most parts of Palestine. The Bedouin, who considered himself the "lord of the land", did not recognise the authority of any government except that of his sheikh.

Bedouin influence on the peasant community varied at different times.

In general as security conditions improved, the Bedouin's autonomy, and hence his influence, decreased. Except for the last fifty years of the Ottoman rule in Palestine security provisions were minimal. Migdal notes that in 1852 "there were only 976 Ottoman soldiers in what today constitutes the West Bank and only 160 of them stood ready for immediate use by the Ottoman ruler (Pasha)" (Migdal, 1980: 9). This was a safer period than the eighteenth century, which experienced the worst deterioration in public security. During its last fifty years, however, the Ottoman Government provided better security conditions by improving communication systems (roads and railways), controlling inter-village wars, and weakening private armies. The Government also tried to integrate the Bedouin community within its system: for example, it re-established the city of Bir es-Saba in 1900, in an attempt to control the Naqab desert tribes. In 1870 Turkish soldiers undertook armed attacks against the Bedouin tribes residing in the Jezreel Valley.

Even though one can perhaps say that the beginning of schemes to settle the Bedouin community started under the Ottoman Government, the inability of the Government to enforce public security, coupled with the bad conditions of roads, made its authority and most of its policies almost absent from Bedouin life.

The second half of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, however, saw major changes that undermined Bedouin society both economically and socially. By the middle of this century, the Bedouin communities had very little option of maintaining the strength and influence they had enjoyed for centuries. As their power decreased, so did their influence on peasant settlements.

LOWLAND VERSUS HIGHLAND SETTLEMENTS

The lowlands of Palestine, especially the coastal plain, presented a pattern of sedentary settlement which is very different from that of the mountains, due to the differences in its social history, as well as in topography and climate. The two areas had settlements which

were very different both in their character and in their patterns of distribution.

I. Discontinuity Versus Stability

Until the beginning of this century, the general conditions in most parts of the coastal plains presented great hardships for the inhabitants of these areas. Conditions were not favourable to stable and continuous settlements. Unlike settlements in the mountainous areas, those on the coast were exposed to a number of threats which often resulted in their destruction or desertion.

The lowlands included many swampy areas in which severe epidemics often appeared and caused the deaths of many of the inhabitants (Baldensberger, 1913: 22). In addition, the presence of sand dunes south of Jaffa all the way to the southern coast borders made this area uninhabitable (Fig. 1.1). At the same time, settlements along the coastal plain were exposed and vulnerable to internal and external conflicts and wars. And with few exceptions, invading foreign armies in Palestine have passed through the coastal plain. In contrast, conquering armies rarely passed through the mountain areas and rarely occupied the highlands. These invading armies often brought about considerable destruction in lowland settlements. (In 332 B.C. Alexander the Great destroyed settlements on the coastal plain completely and ended the Phoenician Empire. The new Mameluk rulers in 1291 AD did the same, in a deliberate policy of destruction in order to end European influence).

In spite of these continuous challenges to the inhabitants of the lowlands, there were always many attractions to living in the coastal plains as opposed to the mountains. The lowlands included some of the most fertile land in all Palestine, such as the Jezreel Valley. They were not only the route of military forces, but also the major route for commercial traffic, particularly the Via Maris (the coastal highway). During more peaceful times and with improved security conditions, the lowlands enjoyed a much more flourishing economy than that of the highlands, leading to an expansion of settlements.

Unlike the mountain settlements which changed very little before the nineteenth century, the coastal plain had always been characterised by considerable fluctuation in the size of its settled area, and its population, as well as in the role, number, and importance of its settlements.

Amiran made a comparison between major ancient towns in both areas. He demonstrated that in the plains out of a total of eight towns, two had ceased to exist and two had shrunk to villages, while only four maintained their status. In contrast "mountain towns have existed without interruption, though fluctuating in importance and number of population" (Amiran, 1953: 192).

II. Uneven Distribution Versus Even Distribution: A Product of Rural Dependency on Urban Centres

While villages in the highlands were scattered and covered almost the entire area (Fig. 1.11), villages in the lowlands were concentrated mainly in the southern parts of the coastal plain (the Jerusalem-Jaffa-Gaza triangle), along major roads and around major towns. The concentration in the Jerusalem-Jaffa-Gaza triangle could perhaps be explained by the fact that this area had always been an important trade centre and hence easily accessible. In addition, the presence of government authorities limited Bedouin attacks and hence encouraged peasant settlements in this triangle. This concentration could also be attributed to climatic factors. If villages in this area were to be deserted for reasons of security or as a result of floods, it was always easier to resettle and recultivate southern areas which dried up faster and tended to deteriorate less than those settlements which were located in the central or northern parts of the coastal plain.

The concentration of coastal villages around the Jerusalem-Jaffa-Gaza triangle, as well as around other urban centres such as Acre, can also be attributed to a number of other factors; chief among them are the early existence of lowland landlords, the formation of large landed estates, the use of extensive farming and the development of

the citrus fruit industry. Those factors resulted in the subjugation of coastal peasants to landlords and urban notables and hence a decrease in rural autonomy. In contrast, the majority of highland villages enjoyed substantial rural autonomy from their townships, perhaps with the exception of villages around the town of Nablus.

The spatial relationship between villages, towns, and roads tells us a great deal about the differences in relations between peasants and town dwellers in both areas (mountain and coast). It also reflects security conditions.

In Palestine, the main urban centres occupied two major axes. The first group of towns were located along the coastal highway and included from south to north: Gaza - 'Asqalan - Jaffa - Haifa - and Acre. Villages were either located on the main coastal road or close to it (concentrating around major towns as explained above).

In the highland group of towns, the town-road relationship was somewhat similar, but village-road or village-town relationships were very different. As can be seen in Fig. 1.11, the major highland road which stretched from Bir el-Saba' south, passed through all the towns of Hebron, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, el-Bireh, Nablus, Jenin and Nazareth. It is important to note that this highway which stretched the length of the country had only five villages located along it: Dhayiriyeh, Ein Sina, Huwara, Balata and Deir Sharaf (villages or small towns like Halhul, Beit Jala, Shu'fat, and Silat ed-Daher grew towards the main road during the 20th century only). This striking phenomenon of the villages keeping away from the main road can be explained by the following: 1) Mountain villages were more or less self-sufficient. They were villages with a majority of small land holders which lived on subsidiary agriculture. Most of these villages had their own crafts: women made and embroidered their own dresses, constructed household utensils (mud bins, pots, dishes, jars, etc.) and wove rugs and baskets. This gave the village substantial autonomy and made its contacts with town occasional or seasonal. 2) Their seclusion from main roads protected them from invading armies and government authorities (represented by its tax collectors). The absence of Bedouin threats enabled them to survive

with less dependency on the government or town notables, who provided security for coastal plain villages. Even though mountain villages suffered from inter-village wars, particularly between the two fallaheen factions, Qais and Yemen, their relationship to towns or main roads was not much affected.

THE CENTRAL HIGHLANDS: Topographical Determinism ?

The rest of this chapter will focus on the central part of the highlands in order to trace in more detail the different factors which have influenced the dispersion of villages within this region.

The central section of the hill region in Palestine comprises The Hebron, Jerusalem and Nablus hills. In general the barren hills of Hebron and Jerusalem are simple and compact structures. The top of the Jerusalem hills is a compact upfold, hardly disturbed by faults. The Hebron mountains are narrow with a flat plateau. The southern parts of this mountain range are dry, and the eastern slopes are both extremely steep and arid. The western slopes are more fertile than those of the south and east.

The Nablus hills are morphologically more diverse. Many branch and rift valleys dissect the mountain blocks. Internal basins isolate the different mountain ridges. All of these valleys and basins are fertile, and the eastern slopes in this area are not pronouncedly arid. Due to the broken nature of the Nablus hills, moisture bearing sea winds coming from the west reach the eastern fold. The western slopes are of low foothills broken by valleys which connect the central parts of the hills with the coastal plain. Unlike the Hebron and Jerusalem hills which have a relatively small number of springs, the Nablus hills have many.

How did this geographic structure affect the dispersion of sedentary villages?

The following observations suggest that the nature of the terrain was one of the factors which determined the way in which villages

dispersed.

The central highlands have always been considered the "core" of the Palestinian peasantry. Most of the peasant villages are concentrated in this area. Out of the 598 villages recorded in the 1870s, 498 (83%) of them were located in the highlands, while only 100 (17%) were located in the lowlands. The area between Nablus and Bethlehem had the highest concentration of villages in all of Palestine - around 300 villages, constituting 50% of the total villages, were located in this area ('Alami, 1984: 14).

In general, villages in the central highlands were scattered and covered almost the entire area. On the one hand, the Nablus hills had numerous villages which were small both in number of population and the size of their land holdings. The area was characterized by a high density of villages with even distribution. The fertility of land, the availability of a number of springs and the favourable security conditions made it possible for large numbers of settlements to occupy relatively small pieces of land in close proximity. (The fertility of the land here could also support villages with large populations).

On the other extreme, the Hebron area was characterized by a low density of settlements, i.e., a small number of settlements unevenly distributed. Villages in this area were large both in number and population and land holdings. As for the large size of the population, it is probable that in times of insecurity the population of the peripheral areas settlements were forced to concentrate in strong defensible settlements (Amiran, 1953: 71). Continuous sedentarisation of Bedouin had also contributed to the increased size in population of southern villages. The village of Yatta, for example, was described by the Survey of Western Palestine in the 1870's as "a large village standing high on a ridge, built of stone, but some of the inhabitants live in tents". The aridity of land resulted in big land-holdings for each village. In order to have enough agricultural produce to meet the peasants' needs, villages had to own comparatively large pieces of land. All villages located on the southern and eastern slopes of the central

highlands had large land holdings (Fig. 12). The scarcity of springs was another reason for these villages to be widely dispersed. One also notices that the vast majority of villages which functioned as the centres of Sheikhdoms, (i.e., "throne" villages) were relatively large. Examples are Arrabeh, Y'abbad, Dura, Beit-Jibrin, and Abu-Gosh.

The Availability of Agricultural Land And The Formation of Village Distribution Patterns:

The availability of relatively fertile land seems to be the primary factor in shaping the different patterns of village distribution, that is, the tendency to cluster along longitudinal axes as in the case of the Hebron hills or encircle a fertile basin as in the case of Sanur and 'Arabeh plain in the Nablus area. In general, villages abstained from settling on fertile land; they were located principally on the edges of plateaux and basins (Figs. 1.9 and 1.13).

This is clearly illustrated in the pattern of village distribution in the Hebron hills (Fig. 1.9). Here, one observes a concentration of settlements on the mountain plateau. Fourteen out of the thirty-two villages listed by the Survey of Western Palestine in 1881, were located on the mountain crest. Notice that only the two towns of Hebron and Halhul were located in the centre of the plateau. All other villages were located on the extremities of this plateau.

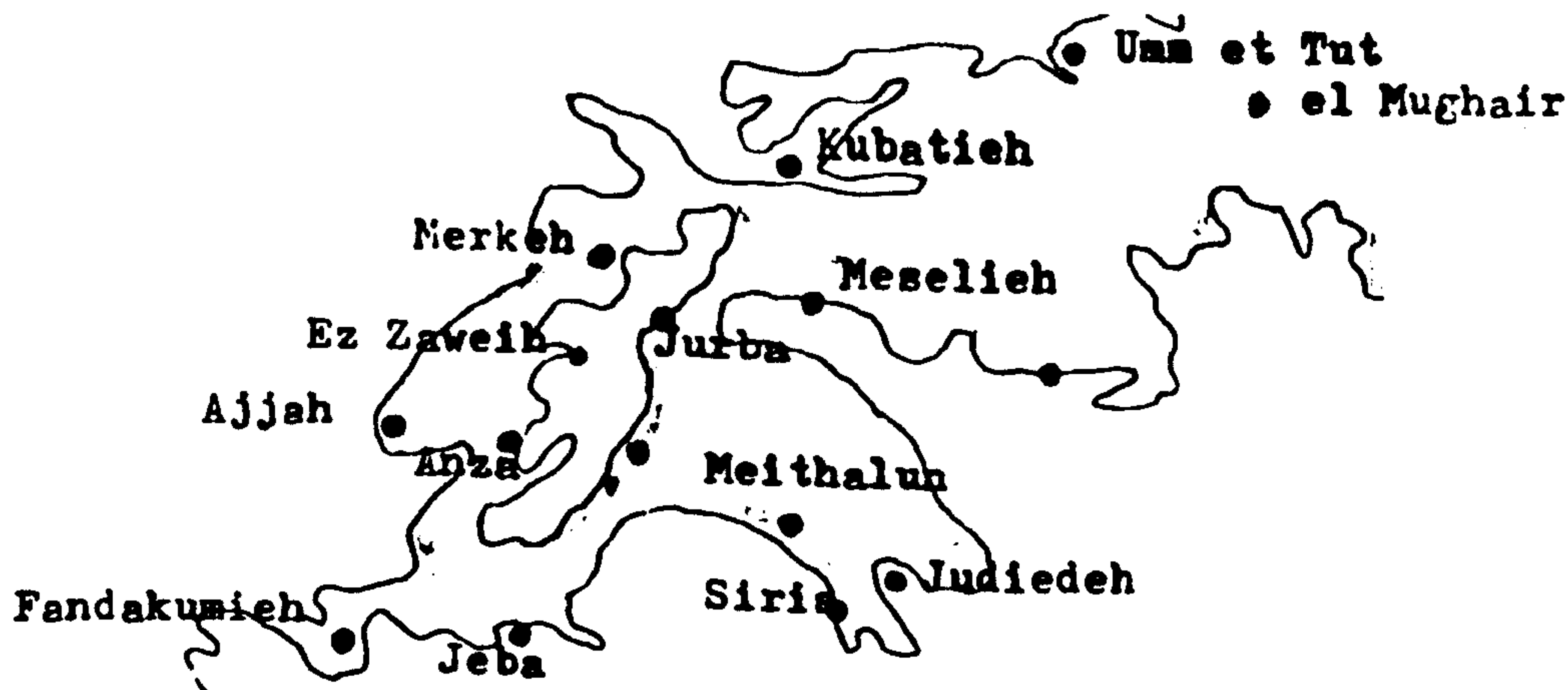


Fig. 1.13: Jarrar villages on the basin extremities (drawn by the author on the basis of information from the Survey of Western Palestine)

Figure 1.13 illustrates how the vast majority of villages which belonged to the Jarrar domain were located on the southern and eastern boundaries of the Sanur Valley a consequence of the attempt to utilise every inch of fertile land. This pattern of settlement, on the extremities of fertile basins, plains or plateaux, is easier to observe in places where the amount of fertile land was extensive. In cases of hill tops and slopes, where agricultural lands were small in size, the relationship between village location and fields is more difficult to depict and requires further examination.

III. The Impact of Arid Zones on Village Distribution

The central highlands are surrounded by two arid zones; this had a distinctive impact on village distribution and size of village land holdings (Fig. 1.12). The aridity and steepness of the eastern slopes, descending towards the Judean desert and the Jordan rift, obviously limited the eastward expansion of sedentary settlements. This is clearly the case of in the eastern slopes of the Hebron hills. Here, the settlements of Bani N'aim, esh-Shuyukh, Sair and Beit Fajjar were all within a distance of only five kilometers east of the mountain's crest.

In the Nablus area, where agricultural land spread farther east (Wadi el Faria' and Ghor Bisan), we notice that eastern settlements such as Tammun, Tiasir, Bardalah and Khurbet Kaaun extended farther east than those in the Hebron or Jerusalem mountains. As a result of the aridity of land, the low annual precipitation (100 -300 mm / 4-12 in), and the scarcity of vegetation and water, we find no settlements on the eastern slopes. In the south, the penetration of the Naqab Desert resulted in the decrease of sedentary settlements as we go south, and the absence of any permanent settlement on the southern slopes, (south of es-Samua and ed-Daherieh).

IV. Was Defence a Crucial Criteria in Village Siting ?

Defence has been cited by many scholars as one of the most, if not the most, crucial factors which determined the "elevated" location of

villages in the Central Highlands. D.H.Amiran, for example claimed that security took precedence over any other consideration. This was illustrated by noting that many villages in the Jerusalem hills were built a hundred or more meters away from the spring in order to secure a strategic location (1953: 203).

E.Efrat also claimed that the location of villages in the Nablus Hills "are located on hill tops, domes and ridges dominating the surrounding countryside and offering a good strategic position" (1977: 99).

In a similar vein Wilson, in Peasant Life in the Holy Land, wrote:

"The sites of these ancient towns and villages were largely determined by physical conditions, such as a position easily defended or the proximity of an abandoned water supply" (1906: 57).

In the case of central highland villages, I believe that the influence of defence on village location, and the degree to which security took precedence over other considerations, can be disputed.

Based on data given by the Survey of Western Palestine, (Conder and Kitchner, 1881), I surveyed 325 villages out of a total of 372 (not all villages' locations or elevation were given by the Survey). All of these villages belong to Central Highland Sheikhdoms. In general, the villages of these Sheikhdoms are located in the highlands higher than 150 meters above sea level, but substantial numbers are located on the western slopes and low coastal plains.

The number of villages tabulated by the present author in the Hebron and the Jerusalem hills is 126. Out of this 76 (60%) are located on hill tops, 25 (20%) are on mountain slopes, and 25 (20%) are on low ground. In the case of villages located in the Nablus hills, a total number of 199 villages were surveyed: 57 (28%) are on hill tops, 67 (37%) are on mountain slopes and, 75 (38%) are on low ground.

We notice that villages in the two geographic areas have different patterns of location; those in the Hebron and the Jerusalem hills

have a higher percentage of villages on top of mountains than those in the Nablus area. Taking into consideration the physical structure of the former (hardly disturbed by faults), and bearing in mind that the southern areas of the Hebron mountains were "peripheral areas", the explanation for such patterns of location is clear. As mentioned earlier, the threat of Bedouin raids affected only the expansion and location of those villages located in the peripheral zones. The central highland area has been relatively protected from threats of outside enemies.

The one internal threat that might have had an impact on the siting of some highland villages was "inter-village" wars. The on-going wars between the two rival fallaheen factions of Qais and Yemen is seen here as a factor that influenced the location of power centre villages, Qura el Karasi (throne villages).

The defence of any village should be looked at in the wider context of its sheikhdom. Up to the end of the nineteenth century, the central highland area was divided into twenty-one Sheikhdoms. Each Sheikhdom consisted of a number of villages ranging from a minimum of six villages in the Bitawi Sheikhdom (Nablus area), to a maximum of fifty-six villages in the bilad Hareth esh-Shamalieh (Jenin area). The throne villages were the centres of power and wealth of the Sheikhdom. The sheikh of such a village was often the tax farmer (multazim) of his Sheikhdom.

Thus, the village was never independent in its political role or in matters related to defence. The village's security was slocated in the power or lack of power of its Sheikhdom. Village security was the duty of the Sheikhdom army under the rule of its chief Sheikh (Sheikh en-nahyeh). Hence, it was crucial that throne villages have a defendable strategic siting.

Again from data given by the Survey of Western Palestine and from field data, this author studied the locations of the 24 throne villages (some sheikhdoms had more than one throne village because two villages in the same sheikhdom competed for power and tax-farming rights (iltizam) such as the two villages of Deir Ghassaneh

and 'Abwein in the Bani Zaid sheikhdome). Nineteen villages (80%) are located on top of hills or top of ridges (see table 1).

Except for the throne village of Sanour, none of the highland villages had a wall around it. The absence of perimeter walls or other elements for fortification, such as watch towers, ditches or fortresses, leads me to believe that, with the exception of throne villages, defence did not take precedence over other considerations in the location or siting of highland villages. It was the security of agricultural fields rather than the security of the village itself that was crucial. (See Canaan, 1932: 228).

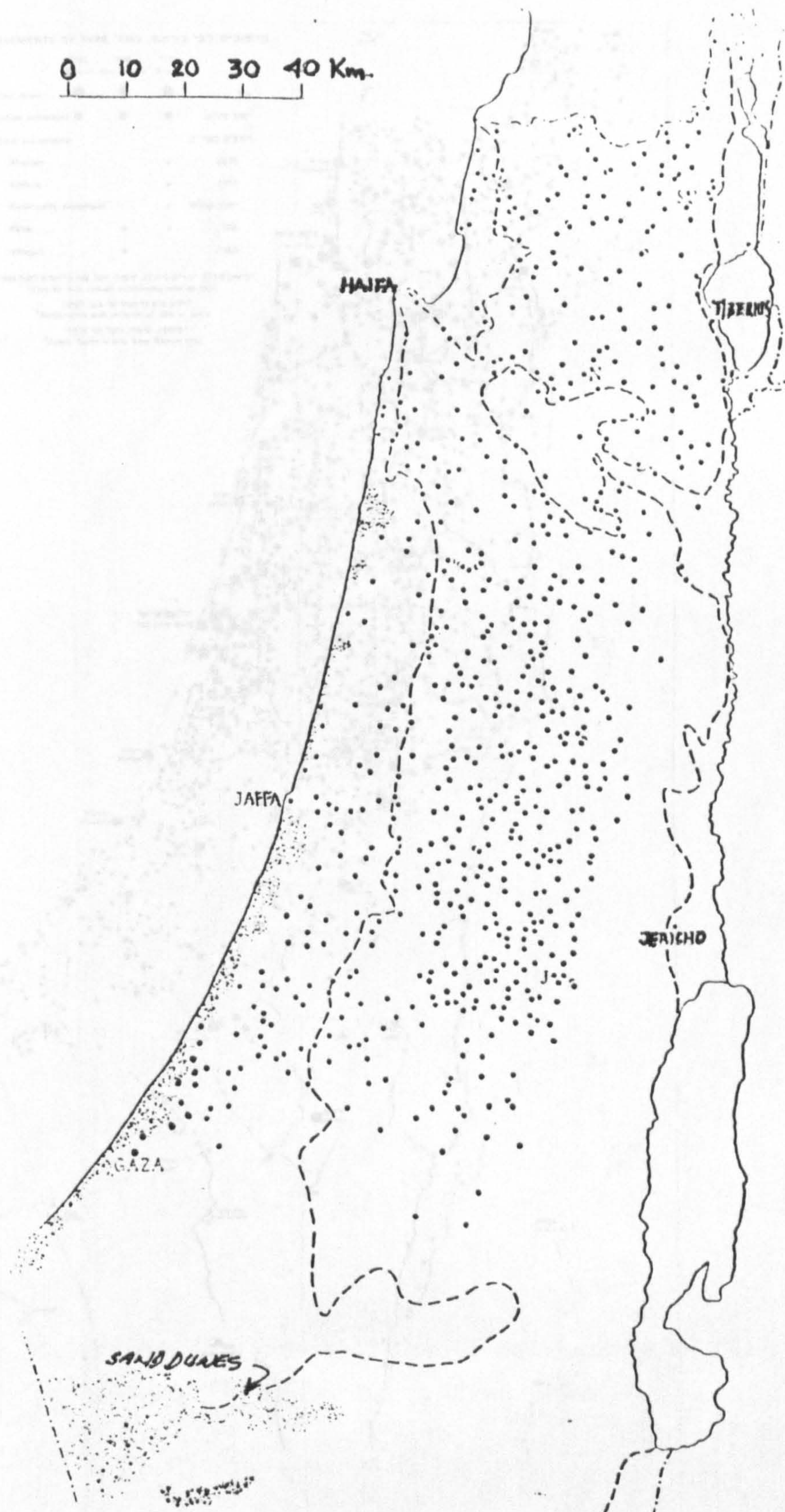


Fig. 1.1: Settlements in 1875 according to the Survey of Western Palestine. Source: D.H.K. Amiran (1953)

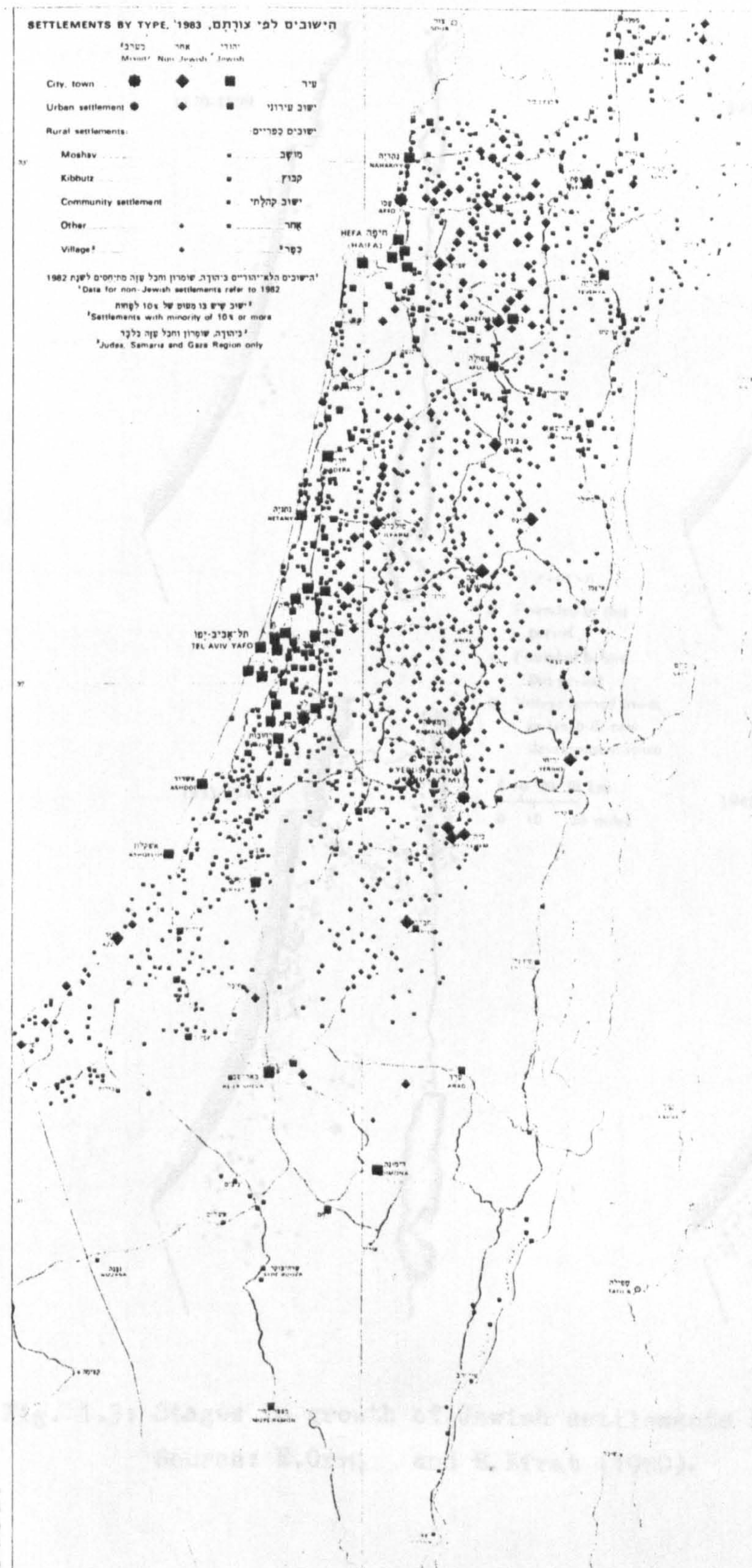


Fig. 1.2: Dispersion of settlements, 1983.

Source: Atlas of Israel, Survey of Israel, Jerusalem ('85)

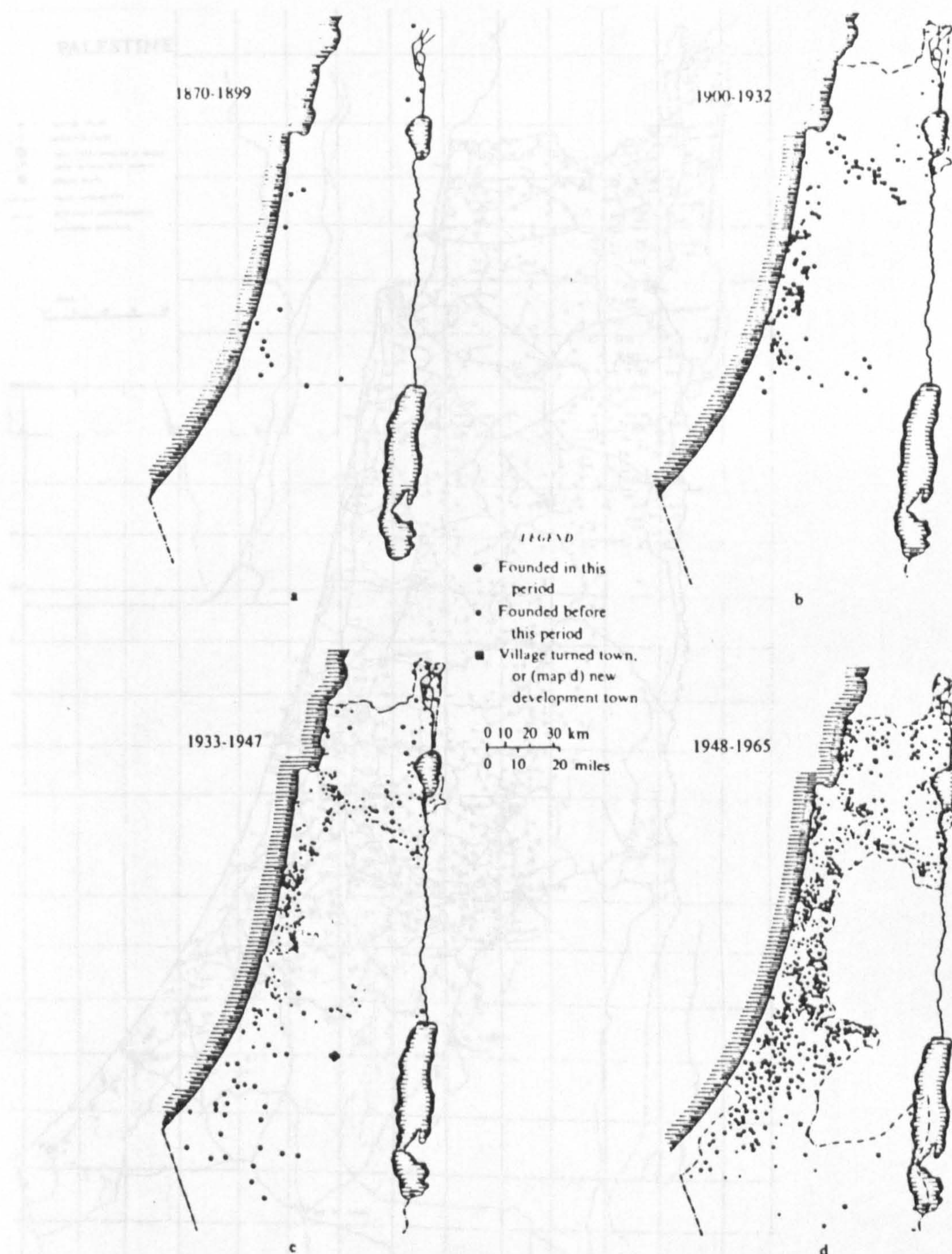


Fig. 1.3: Stages in growth of Jewish settlements in Palestine

Source: E.Orni and E.Efrat (1980).



Fig. 1.5: Location of Palestinian refugee camps

Source: map of UNERWA's areas, UNERWA H.Q. Vienna (1984).

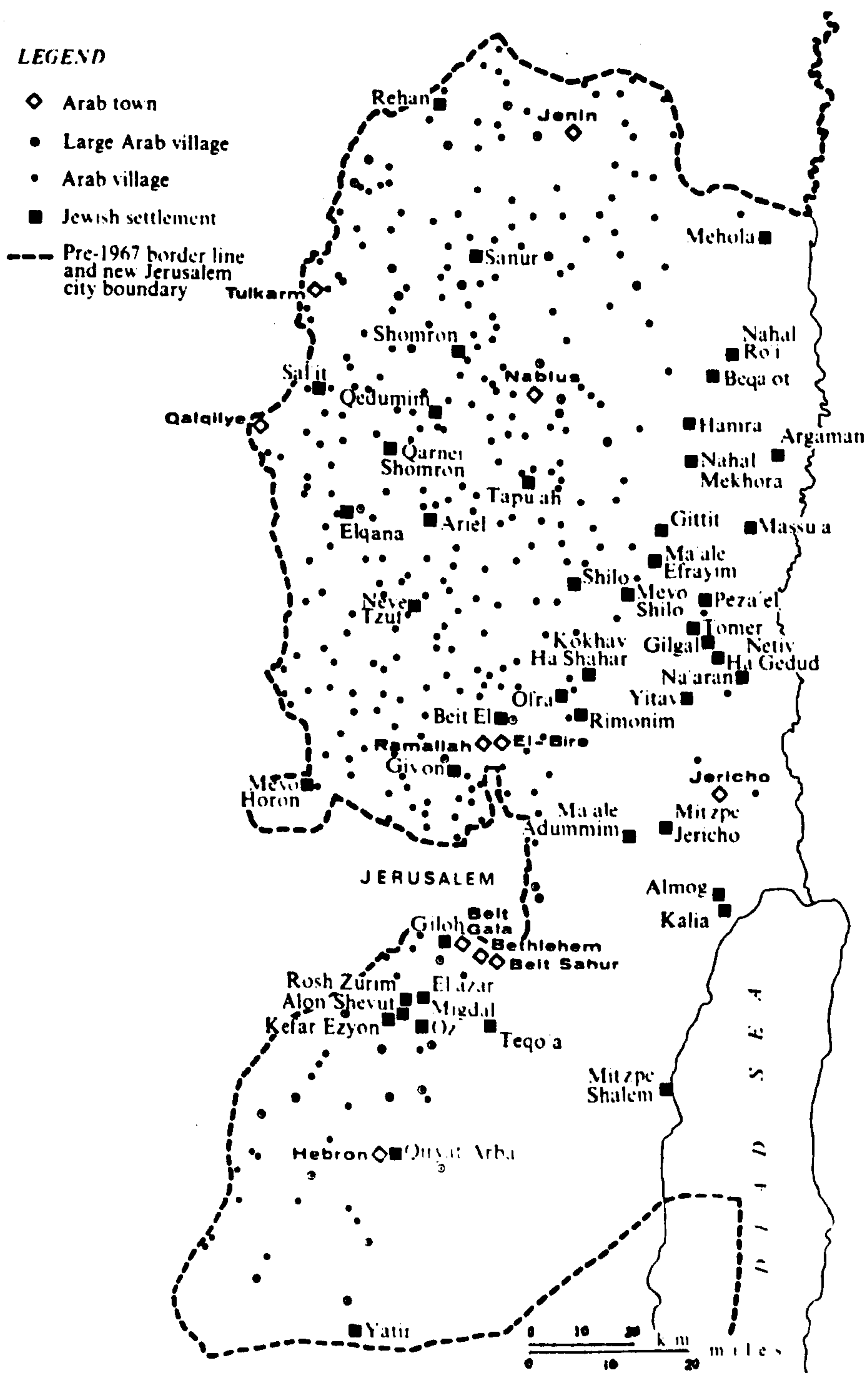


Fig. 1.6: Jewish settlements on the West Bank established since 1967

Source: E.Orni and E. Efrat (1980).

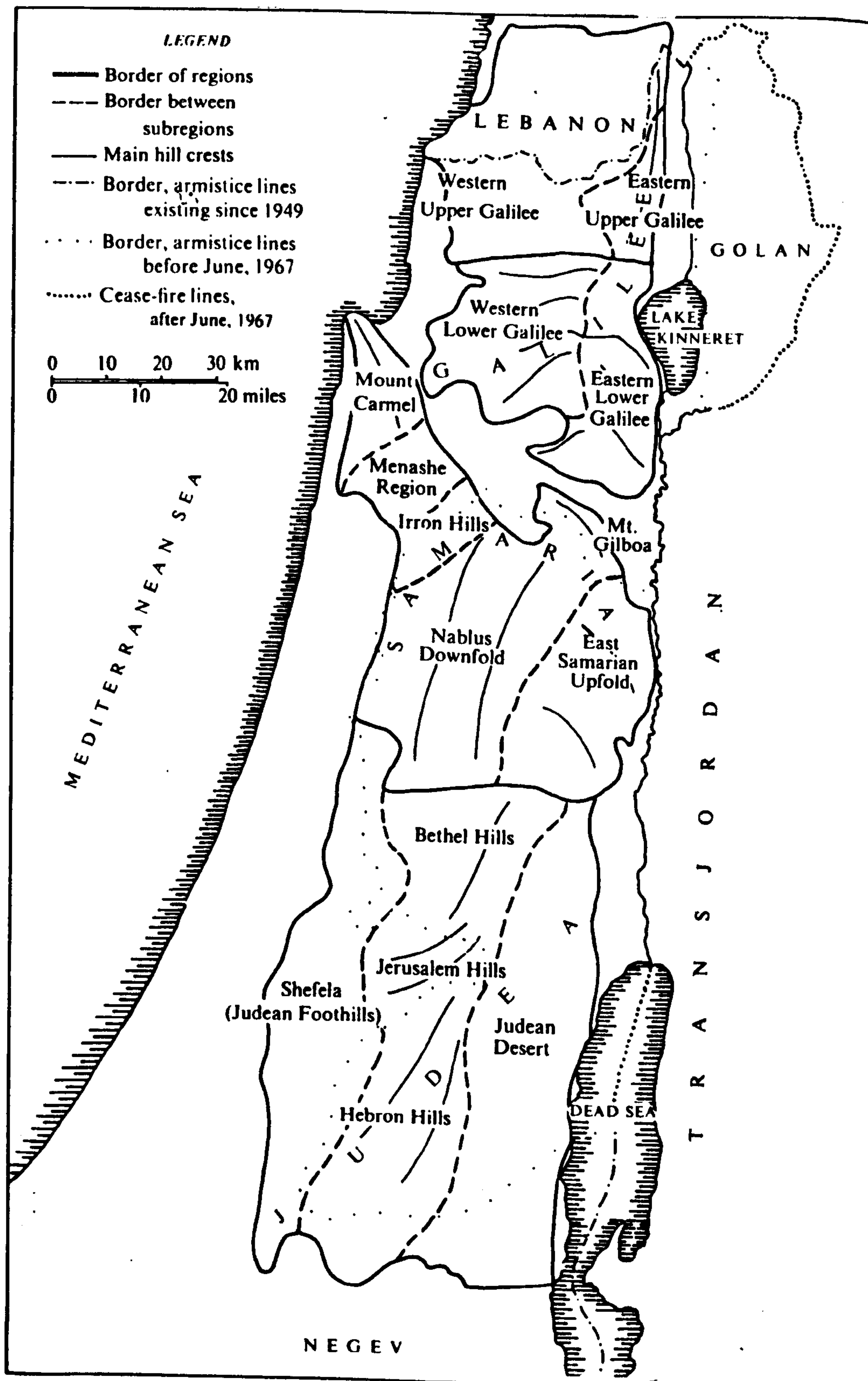


Fig. 1.7: Natural subregions of the Highlands
Source: E. Orni and E. Efrat (1980).

Fig. 11: Position and approximate size of rural settlements (circles) and bedouin tribes (triangles) at the end of the 19th century. Open symbols for the area of Gaza and I ajjūn (not yet comparable with data for 16th century).

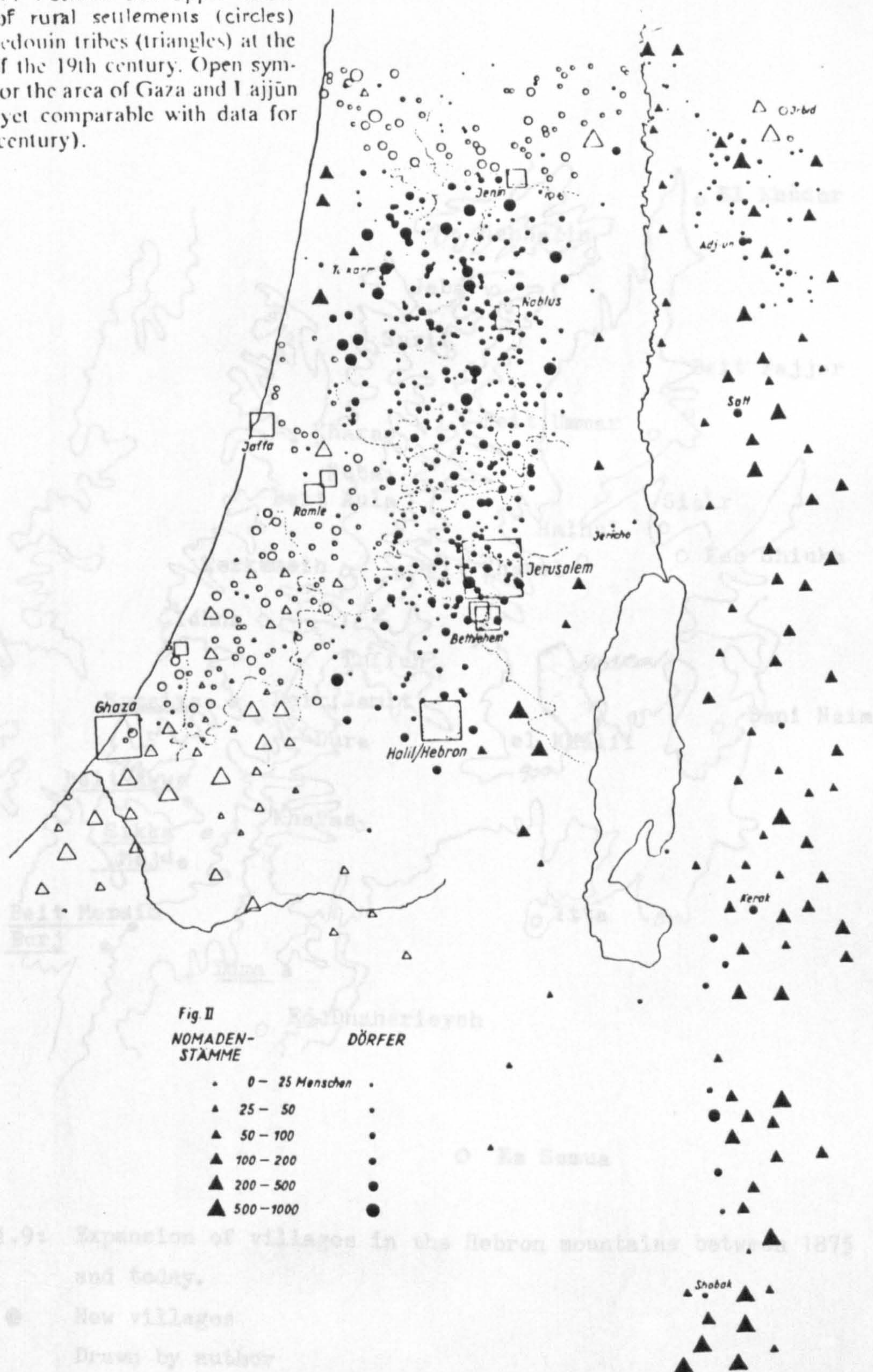


Fig. 1.9: Expansion of villages in the Hebron mountains betw. 1875 and today.

© New villages

Drawn by author

Fig. 1.8: Location of nomadic encampments and peasant communities at the end of the 19th century
Source: Hütteroth (1975).

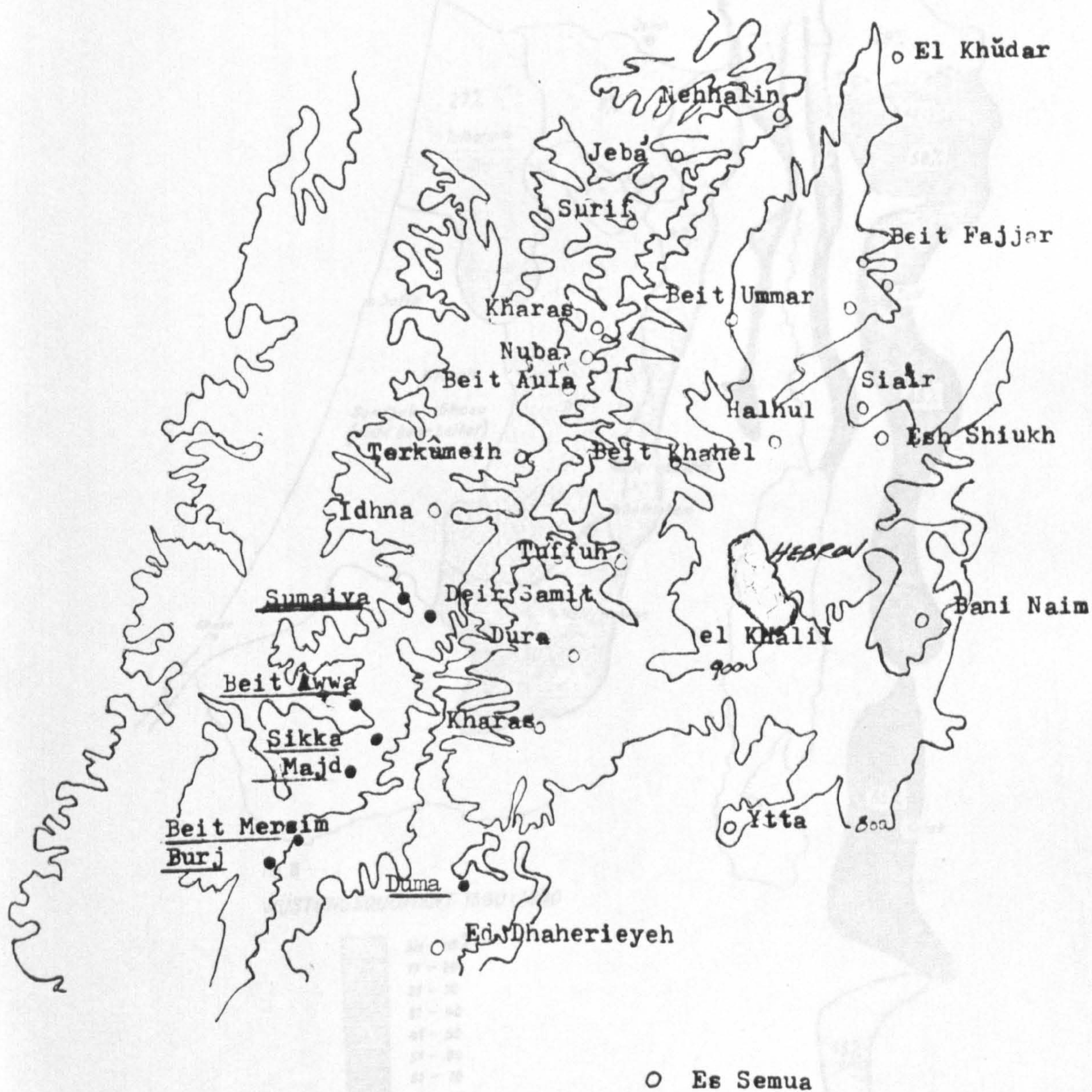


Fig. 1.9: Expansion of villages in the Hebron mountains between 1875 and today.

- New villages
- Drawn by author

Fig. 1.10: Percentage of abandoned villages between the end of the 16th century and end of the 19th century
Source: Hacharova (1975).

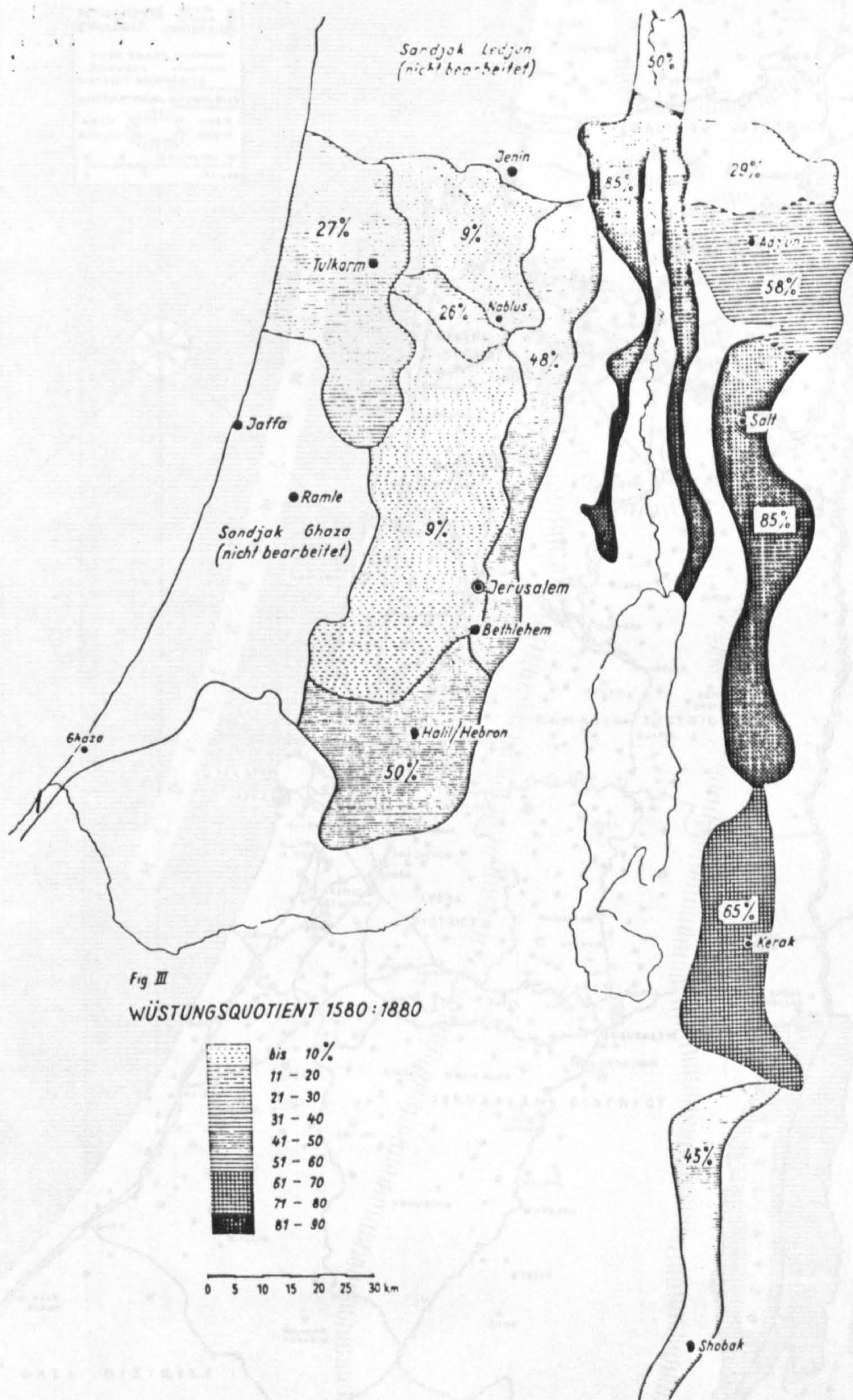


Fig. 1.10: Percentage of abandoned villages between the end of the 16th century and end of the 19th century
Source: Hütteroth (1975).

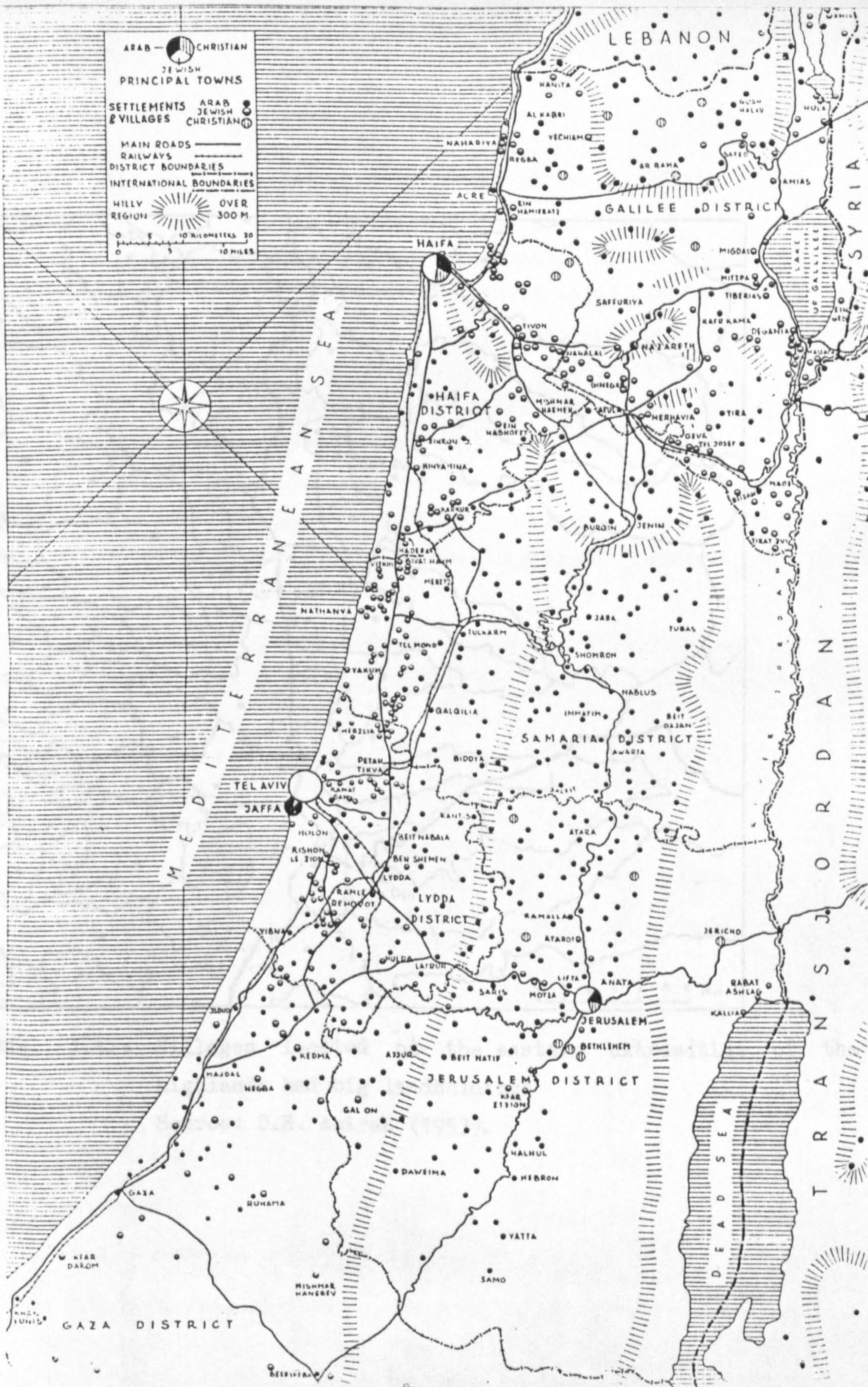


Fig. 1.11: Village dispersion in the highlands and coastal plains.
 Note village-town-road relationship
 Source: Kendall and Baruth (1949).

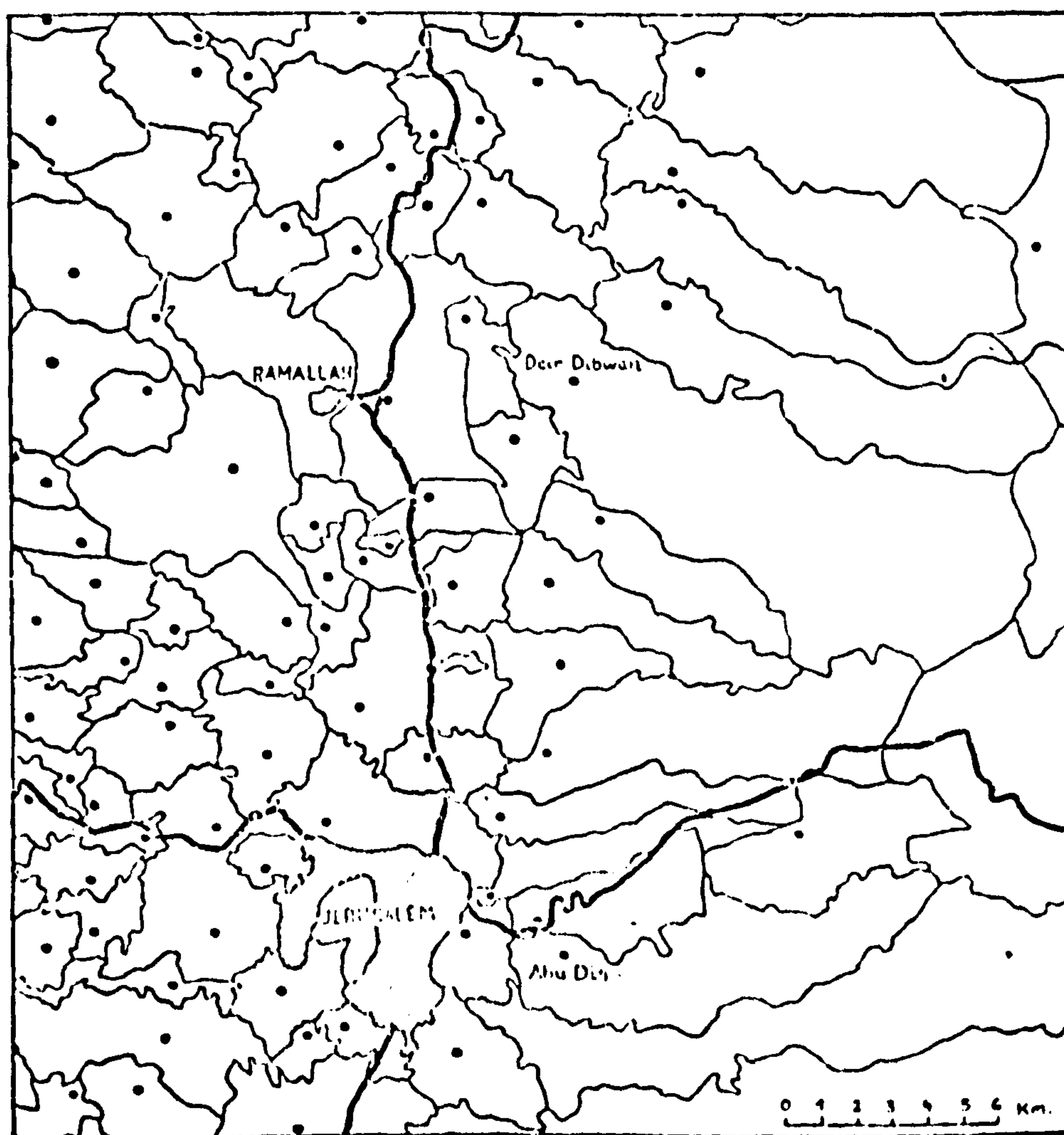


Fig. 1.12: Villages located on the eastern extremities of the highlands had big landholdings
Source: D.H. Amiran (1953).

CHAPTER TWO

THE BANI ZAID SHEIKHDOM: AN ADMINISTRATIVE AND DEFENSE UNIT

During the nineteenth century, the Bani Zaid sheikhdom (mashiakha or nahyeh) was one of twenty-one administrative central highland sheikhdoms. Up until the middle of the nineteenth century, sheikhs of central villages (throne villages) enjoyed great political power and wealth. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, the sheikhs of throne villages started to lose their powers as the Ottoman rulers shifted their alliances from rural sheikhs to urban notables and local mukhtars (appointed notables) (Migdal, 1980: 11). By the turn of this century their power had almost ceased.

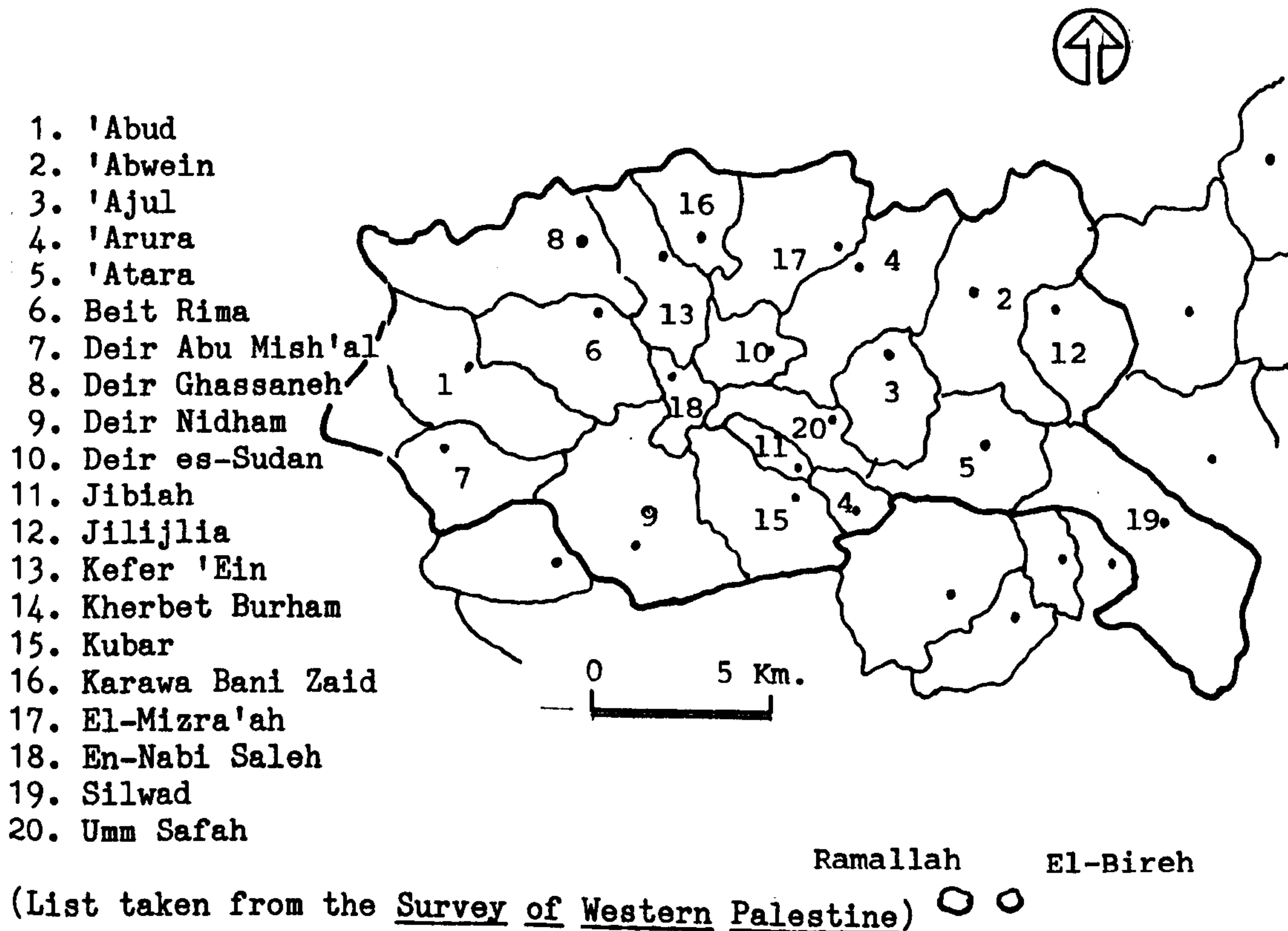


Fig. 2.1: Bani Zaid sheikhdom (Source: M. Dabbagh, 1965)

The Bani Zaid sheikhdom, which included nineteen villages, (Fig. 2.1), was located to the west of the highland's main road, north-west of Jerusalem. This sheikhdom had more or less defined geographic boundaries which separated it from the surrounding sheikhdoms: Wadi

Dilb (north-west of Ramallah) separated Bani Zaid from that of Bani Harith esh-Shamali in the south, Wadi Natif in the north separated it from Bilad Jama'in. Geographically, Bani Zaid occupied one of the roughest terrains in the mountainous area, the one with the most faults and the steepest slopes. The domain covered a group of hills broken up by a number of narrow and deep valleys and gorges. Unlike the valleys in the Nablus area, wadis in this area are very narrow and hence become water collectors during the winter months. The narrowness of these valleys made them very difficult to cultivate. As a result of this (and perhaps other factors) we do not find any settlements in these valleys. However the hill tops of this sheikhdом are relatively wide; hence it was possible for peasants in this area to settle on them and work the fields around them.

Based on data from the Survey of Western Palestine (1881) and from field trips, I studied the location of the nineteen Bani Zaid villages. Thirteen (65%) are located on hill tops, seven (35%) are located on mountain slopes where flat cultivable parcels are available. None of the Bani Zaid villages are located at the foot of hills or in the valleys.

According to the 1922 census, the Bani Zaid sheikhdом had a total area of 144,571 dunums (one acre is approximately four dunums), and a total population of 6,271. Villages in this sheikhdом varied in their population size and the areas of their land holdings. While the tiny village of Khirbet Jibia had 62 persons, 17 houses and 1,666 dunums of land, the largest was the Christian village of 'Abud (the only Christian village in Bani Zaid sheikhdом) having a population of 754, 215 houses, and 15,000 dunums of land (1922).

The sheikh of the throne village of Deir Ghassaneh (who always belonged to the Barghouthi clan) was also the chief sheikh of Bani Zaid (sheikh en-nahyeh). Although each village had its own sheikh and council of elders that managed its internal and external affairs, the chief sheikh was the tax collector (multazim) for the whole sheikhdом up until the 1890s. As a result of this, he enjoyed tremendous power and wealth. For example, the chief sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh had the power of mobilizing the sheikhdом's army, which was

drawn from all the Bani Zaid villages. During the reign of the Egyptian leader Ibrahim Pasha (1832 - 1840), the chief sheikh of Deir-Ghassaneh, sheikh Abdul Jaber, was put to death by Ibrahim Pasha, (Abu Zuheir, interview: 1985). Musa Ahmad Sehweil from 'Abwein and Ali er-Rabbah of Kubar succeeded him. In the later days of Musa, sheikh Saleh, the son of the late sheikh Abdul Jaber, struggled to regain his father's position, and the sheikhdom was divided into two domains: the eastern Bani Zaid sheikhdom which included seven villages with 'Abwein as its chief town, and the Sehwaills as the chief ruling family; and the western Bani Zaid sheikhdom which included 12 villages with Deir Ghassaneh as its chief village, (Macalister, 1906: 354). The two areas were geographically divided by a wadi.

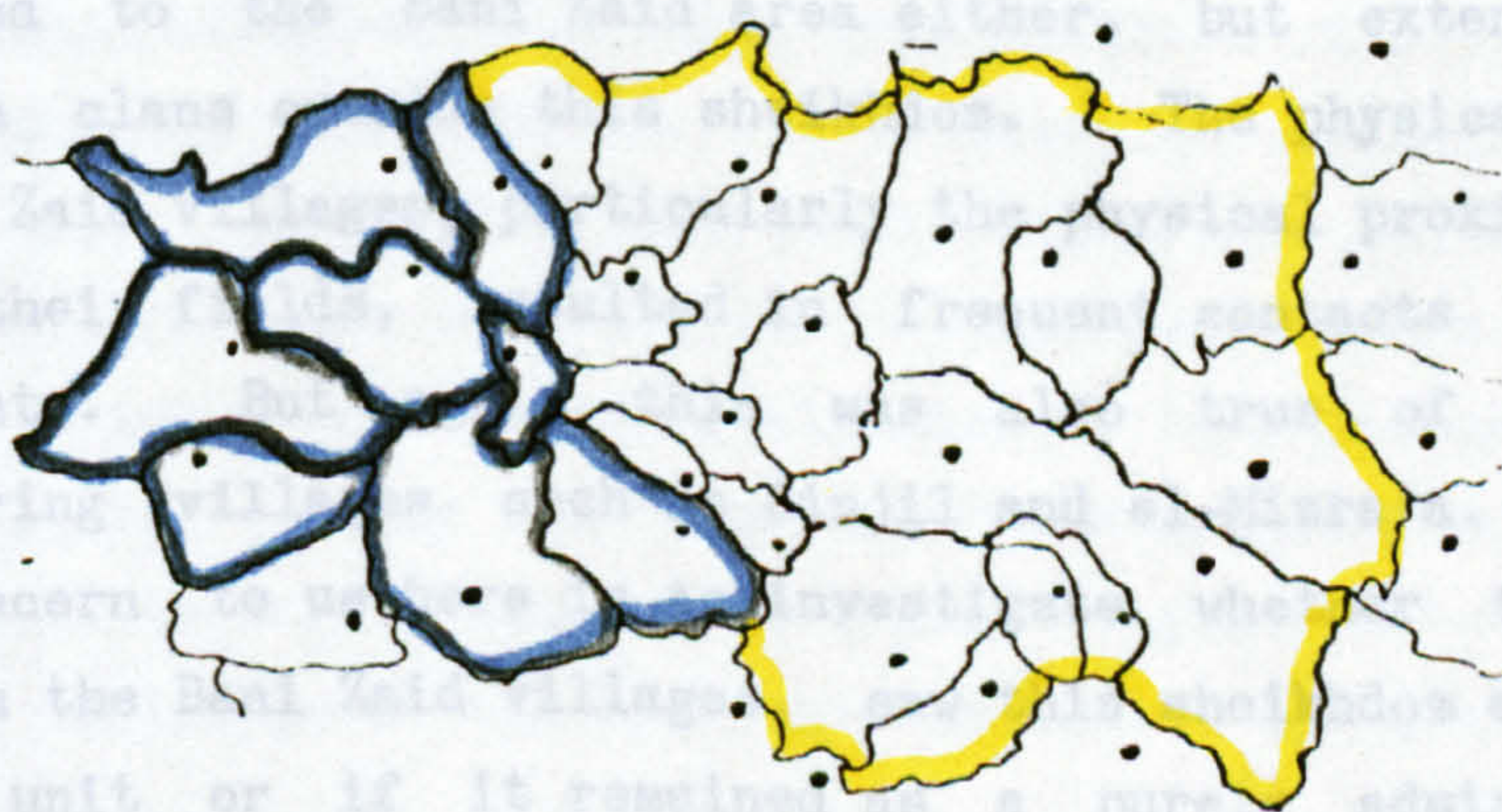




Fig. 2.2:  indicates Barghouthi villages
 fallaheen (non-Barghouthi) villages

As figure 2.2 illustrates, the Bani Zaid villages were divided into Barghouthi villages, where the Barghouthi clans constituted the powerful and most influential section of the village population, and "fallaheen" ("peasant") villages. Fallaheen villages were those in which members of the Barghouthi clan--associated with the dominant feudal group-- did not reside. In this context, fallaheen refers to non-Barghouthis, though the Barghouthi clans were themselves peasants in the wider sense (i.e., being village dwellers who depended on agriculture). Yet the power and wealth of their dominant sub-clan set the whole lineage group apart from other clans. Here the term fallaheen carried negative connotations. It referred to people who

tilled the land and owned little, as opposed to the Barghouthis who, by association and in the public image, were seen as the higher status group.

The Barghouthi-dominated villages were all in the western Bani Zaid sheikhdom, with the exception of the village of Qarawat Bani Zaid. Thus the inhabitants of these eight villages were socially as well as spatially divided into two distinct groups: Barghouthi and fallaheen. For the Barghouthis, these eight villages were seen as the pool for eligible marriages, and the different Barghouthi clans residing in these villages married within the lineage. Barghouthi marriages were only extended to the notable families in Kur and Majdal Sadik villages, both located outside the Bani Zaid area (Fig. 3.4). For the fallaheen clans, inter-village marriages were not restricted to the Bani Zaid area either, but extended to other fallaheen clans outside this sheikhdom. The physical proximity of the Bani Zaid villages, particularly the physical proximity and overlap of their fields, resulted in frequent contacts amongst their inhabitants. But again this was also true of non-Bani Zaid neighbouring villages such as Sinjil and el-Mizra'a. What is of main concern to us here is to investigate whether the peasants living in the Bani Zaid villages, saw this sheikhdom as a social and spatial unit or if it remained as a purely administrative and political one.

In contrast to individual villages which were conceived by their inhabitants as distinct spatial units, the Bani Zaid sheikhdom was perceived as a political-administrative unit. It was a unit of taxation and a potential unit for army mobilisation rather than a social, economic or spatial unit, particularly for the fallaheen.

In general the vast majority of Bani Zaid villages - as well as villages in other sheikhdoms - had very similar life styles. Land was the basis of their economy; kinship was the basis for social and economic organisation; and division of labour along gender lines was similar in most villages (with the exception of the Barghouthi women, particularly in the chief town of Deir Ghassaneh). The different village communities also had similar beliefs and similar ethical

values.

Spatially, although each village may have had a different appearance (i.e., different location, size and distribution), the main principles guiding their spatial organisation and spatial relationships were similar: the division of land holdings and living quarters along kinship lines, distinct demarcations between the village built-up areas and its field, and the separation of spaces along gender lines. The relationship of communal spaces to semi-private spaces and the organisational principles guiding the form and division within the peasant house were also similar from village to village.

Though it may be useful to investigate how differences as well as similarities affected the built form in these different villages, (Deir Ghassaneh and 'Abwein, for example, could be fruitfully contrasted), the rest of the thesis will focus on Deir Ghassaneh. The reasons for such a choice lie in Deir Ghassaneh's social as well as its spatial architectural qualities. Even though, by being a throne village it may not "represent" the majority of the peasant villages, it certainly allows for a rich comparison between the built space and dwellings of the dominant Barghouthi clans with that of the fallaheen.

DEIR GHASSANEH: THE "THRONE VILLAGE" OF BANI ZAID

A Historical Background

The village of Deir Ghassaneh is located to the north-west of the Jerusalem hills, 45km from Jerusalem. Deir Ghassaneh is remote from the main central highland road stretching south-north. The closest village to it is Beit Rima (Fig. 2.3).

As the name Deir Ghassaneh (the convent of Ghassaneh) indicates, it was originally a Christian village. The present old mosque in the village is believed by local inhabitants to have originated as a Byzantine church. Very little is known about the early history of

the village. A number of 19th and 20th century written sources make only cursory mention of the village of Deir Ghassaneh in different contexts; (Canaan, 1932:185-186 and 1933:53; Conder and Kitchner, 1881, vol.2 :290; and Dabbagh, 1973: 266-270).

The tradition of oral history in the village concentrated mostly on the legendary origins of the village clans coming from Hijaz and Yemen. This division corresponds to the Qais and Yemen: the two peasant factions that divided rural Palestine in the nineteenth century.

Until the turn of this century, Deir Ghassaneh was both the throne village and a centre for the Qais faction. We have very little exact information about the size of its population during this period. Conder, in 1881, described the village as "of moderate size, built of stone and has olive beneath" (1881:290). The first modern census in Palestine, in 1922, enumerated its inhabitants at 625, all Muslims. In 1931, the population increased to 735, occupying 181 households. Since 1960, Deir Ghassaneh has been merged administratively with the neighbouring villlage of Beit Rima, with a combined population of 4467 (1974).

Deir Ghassaneh was, and remains, a predominantly agricultural community whose land encompasses 12802 dunums (3200 acres), mostly located to the west of the village built-up area; the latter occupying 56 dunums. About two-thirds of the village lands (8151 dunums) are rain-fed olive groves. Grapes, figs, vegetables and cereals are also grown. Up until the 1920s, the great majority of the villagers were subsistence farmers, working inside the village. Very few people sought employment outside. Most villagers worked in agriculture and hence they all more or less carried out the same tasks, with differentiations based on sex, age, social status, and special skills. The daily patterns based on cyclical agricultural activities created a sameness in the rhythms of life in the village. The distinctive rhythm for village men was the back and forth movement from the village to the fields. And the distinctive rhythm for most village women was moving about their homes, with seasonal participation in field work and frequent trips to the

village spring.

VILLAGE CLANS

Kinship was, and to some extent still is, the determining principle of social organisation and of the organisation of agrarian production. The main divide was between the dominant Barghouthi clan and the subordinate "fallaheen" (non-Barghouthi) clans. The Barghouthis, who were big landlords, cultivated their lands with the help of the fallaheen who owned very little and worked to a great extent as share-croppers. Since land ownership was the basis for economic prosperity, the Barghouthi land-owning families, (particularly the Saleh family who was at the top of the social hierarchy) enjoyed a great deal of power, prestige, and respect over the fallaheen. The social and political relations between the two was characterised by the dominance of the Barghouthis and the complete subordination of the fallaheen (see social stratification chapter 4). The Barghouthi clans included six lineages; Daher, Cana'an, Abu Khattab, 'Ashweh, Daood, and Husein. The fallaheen included six different clans; esh-Shu'abi, er-Rabi, Nasir, Mishel, Halabieh, and el-'Adi. The fallaheen also encompassed two single families that took refuge in the village such as the family of el-Muhtadi (the "enlightened") originally a Christian family from 'Abud that converted to Islam, and found refuge in Deir Ghassaneh in 1890. The other single family is the 'Abweini. As the name indicates it came from the village of 'Abwein.

Until 1919 Deir Ghassaneh was headed by a sheikh - always drawn from the Barghouthi Daher lineage- who was the political leader of Deir Ghassaneh and the Bani Zaid region. The sheikh, together with the council of elders representing the other clans, both Barghouthis and fallaheen, managed the internal and external affairs of the village. The 'Alem (learned man), from the Halabieh clan, was the supreme religious authority who administrated religious rituals but lacked political power.

The Barghoutis represented by their sheikh, had strong commercial

ties with urban centers such as Nablus, Lod, and Jaffa. They also had political alliances with urban and rural notables such as the Rayyans, the Qasims and the Jayyousis, the latter residing in the throne village of Kur. Intermarriages took place between the Barghouthis and these feudal families. Such close relationships with urban notables was mainly reflected in the Barghouthi architecture (discussed at length later) and in the seclusion of their women. Unlike most peasant women, who always took part in specific agricultural tasks, the Barghouthi women were confined to their homes.

AN INWARDLY-ORIENTED VILLAGE

With the exception of the sheikh, who performed regional political functions, most villagers in Deir Ghassaneh had limited contacts with the external world. For the majority of the villagers residing in Deir Ghassaneh, its boundaries remained as the demarcations of their entire world. Up until the 1920s, the village provided employment for its men and women who thus remained inside the village or around it. Both the village built-up area and its fields functioned as the common spatial area for living. It was within its boundaries that the villagers spent the long hours of daily work. For the majority of the fallaheen, the village was also the physical setting for the completion of their life cycle. Outside contacts were confined to the occasional inter-village marriages which resulted in social visits to the neighbouring villages. These social visits were of a ceremonial nature i.e., weddings, circumcisions, condolences and feasts. Very few outsiders visited the village. These were restricted to the government officials, mostly tax collectors and army recruiters, and to peddlers and gypsies who came to sell their wares. In 1912, the first school teacher Harbi el Ayoubi, came from Jerusalem to reside in Deir Ghassaneh.

Certain individuals in the village such as the village sheikh and the village Imam, represented the unity of the village as a whole. The sheikh represented the village at the political, social and administrative levels, while the Imam represented the unity of the

village at the spiritual level.

Religious festivals (mawasim) were special occasions that drew thousands of villagers from their communities to the holy sites of regional saints. Deir Ghassaneh itself was the site for minor saints and attracted peasants from neighbouring villages. Other occasions, such as the holy month of Ramadan, the Muslim feasts of al-fiter and al-adha, and marriages, were all appropriate times to visit and to invite relatives from inside and outside the village.

Hence, except for the occasional contacts, Deir Ghassaneh remained relatively isolated from the outside world. However, after the first world war, Palestine fell under British rule. The 1920s were a watershed in the social history of the village and the country as a whole, when wage labour and migration opened up the self-contained economy of the community.



CHAPTER THREE

THE VILLAGE AS A SPATIAL UNIT

Superceding Lineage-based Separation

The village of Deir-Ghassaneh consisted of an agglomeration of social, economic and political groupings. These groupings, whether at the level of nuclear families, extended families or clans, interacted both in harmony and in conflict. In a situation where clan ties and clan identity were as strong as those prevailing in Deir Ghassaneh, it is crucial to examine forces which bound the villagers together and hence contributed to the formation of a village community with a strong village identity and village solidarity.

At the village level, we see the opposition of various parts and their ultimate unity. The different clans of Deir Ghassaneh, who lived in separate quarters (harat), were able to enact their spatial separateness while giving expression to their place in the whole. The different parts of the village were subordinated to the whole; clan identity was subordinated to village identity. What is to be discussed in this chapter are factors which made the village of Deir Ghassaneh an identifiable spatial unit with defined boundaries separating it from neighboring villages.

I. DEIR GHASSANEH AS A SEPARATE SPATIAL UNIT

As in other villages in Palestine, Deir Ghassaneh was spatially separated from other surrounding villages (Fig. 3.1). Both the village built-up area and its fields had clearly demarcated boundaries. Up till the 1920s, the built-up area was a compact, nucleated cluster of houses (Fig. 3.2a), as opposed to a scattered pattern, with each house surrounded by its own landed property (Fig. 3.2b).

Around this crowded settlement, a belt of privately owned gardens called hawakir separated the built-up area from its cultivated



Fig. 3.1: Agricultural fields separate the villages' built-up areas.

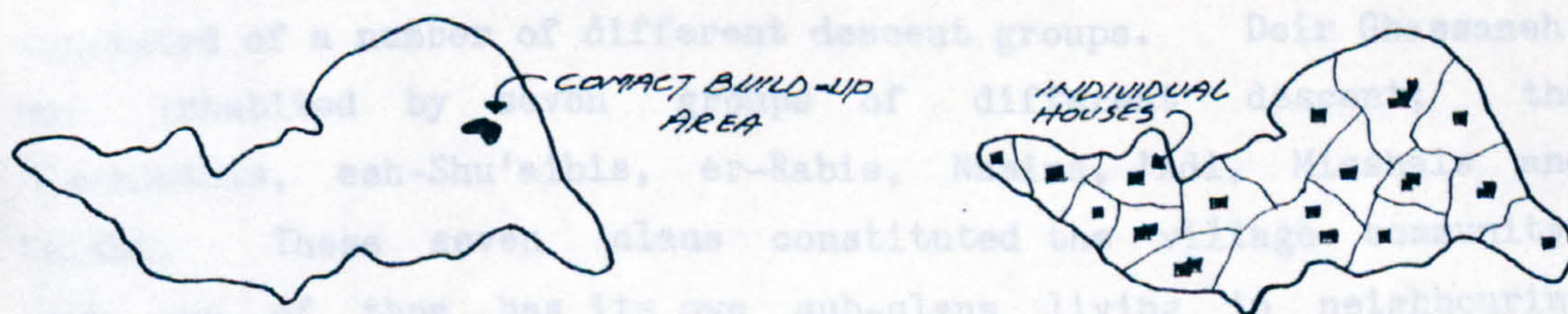


Fig. 3.2a: A compact, nucleated clusters of houses surrounded by village fields.

Fig. 3.2b: A scattered pattern with each house or groups of houses surrounded by its own landed property (hypothetical).

fields. The fields of Deir Ghassaneh in their turn isolated it from neighbouring villages (Fig. 3.3). The world of the villagers of

Deir Ghassaneh was defined by the boundaries of these fields. To the great majority of villagers, these boundaries marked their entire universe.

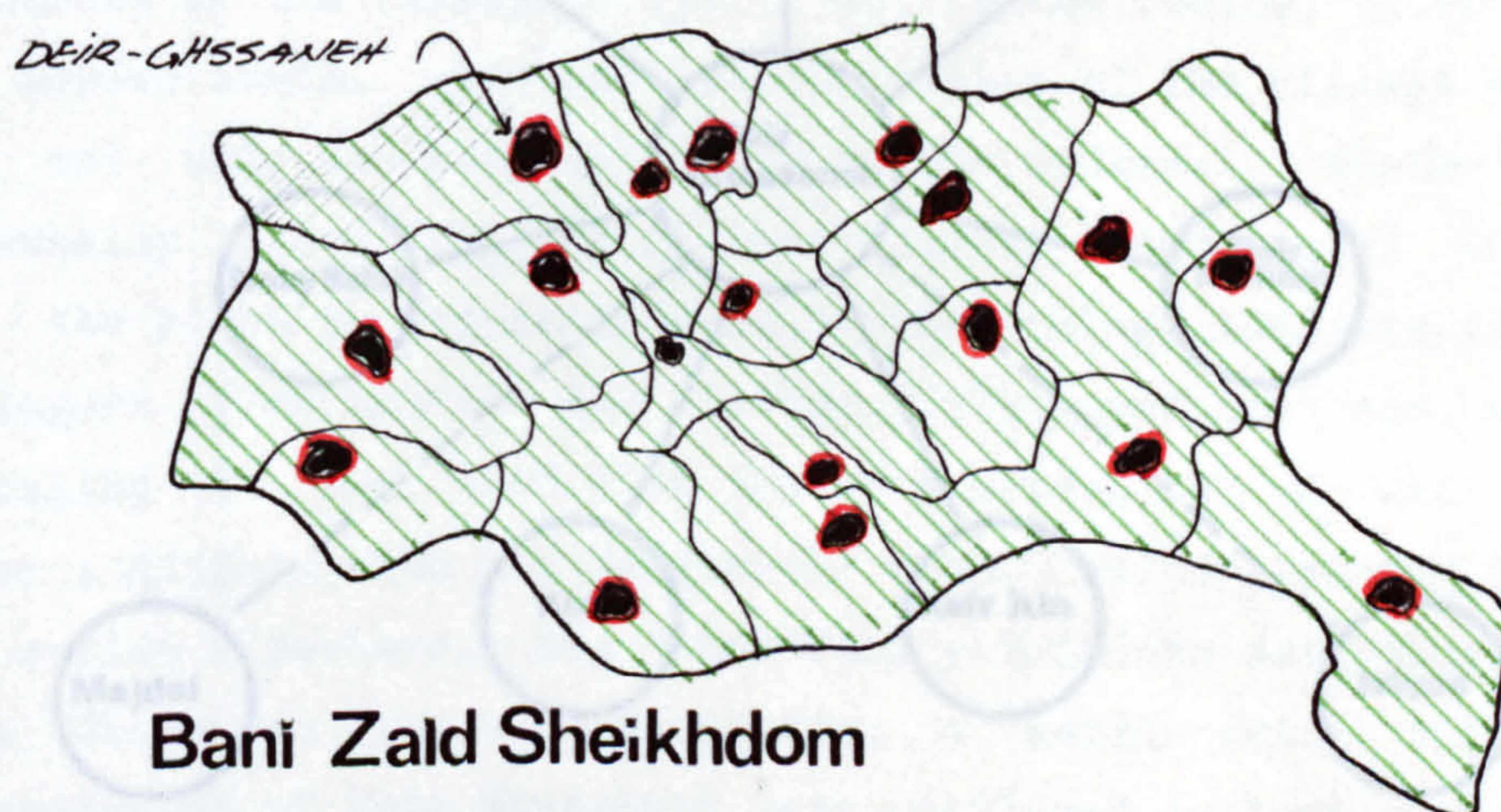


Fig. 3.3: The built-up areas of the different villages separated by
 the villages' fields
 built-up areas
 boundaries of village land
 privately owned gardens(hawakir)

In general, villages were spatial clusterings of communities which consisted of a number of different descent groups. Deir Ghassaneh, was inhabited by seven groups of different descent; the Barghouthis, esh-Shu'aibis, er-Rabis, Nasirs, 'Adi, Misshels and Halabi. These seven clans constituted the village community. Each one of them has its own sub-clans living in neighbouring villages. For example, figure 3.4 illustrates the distribution of the Barghouthi sub-clans in neighbouring villages, both within the Bani Zaid sheikhdom and outside of it. Even though the same clan - in this case the Barghouthi- lived in different villages, their lands were part of the village in which they resided, and were not consolidated as Barghouthi lands (as illustrated in the hypothetical figure 3.5b below). In other words, the village lands belonged to the inhabitants of the different clans in the one village (Fig. 3.5a), rather than to the same sub-clans residing in the different villages.

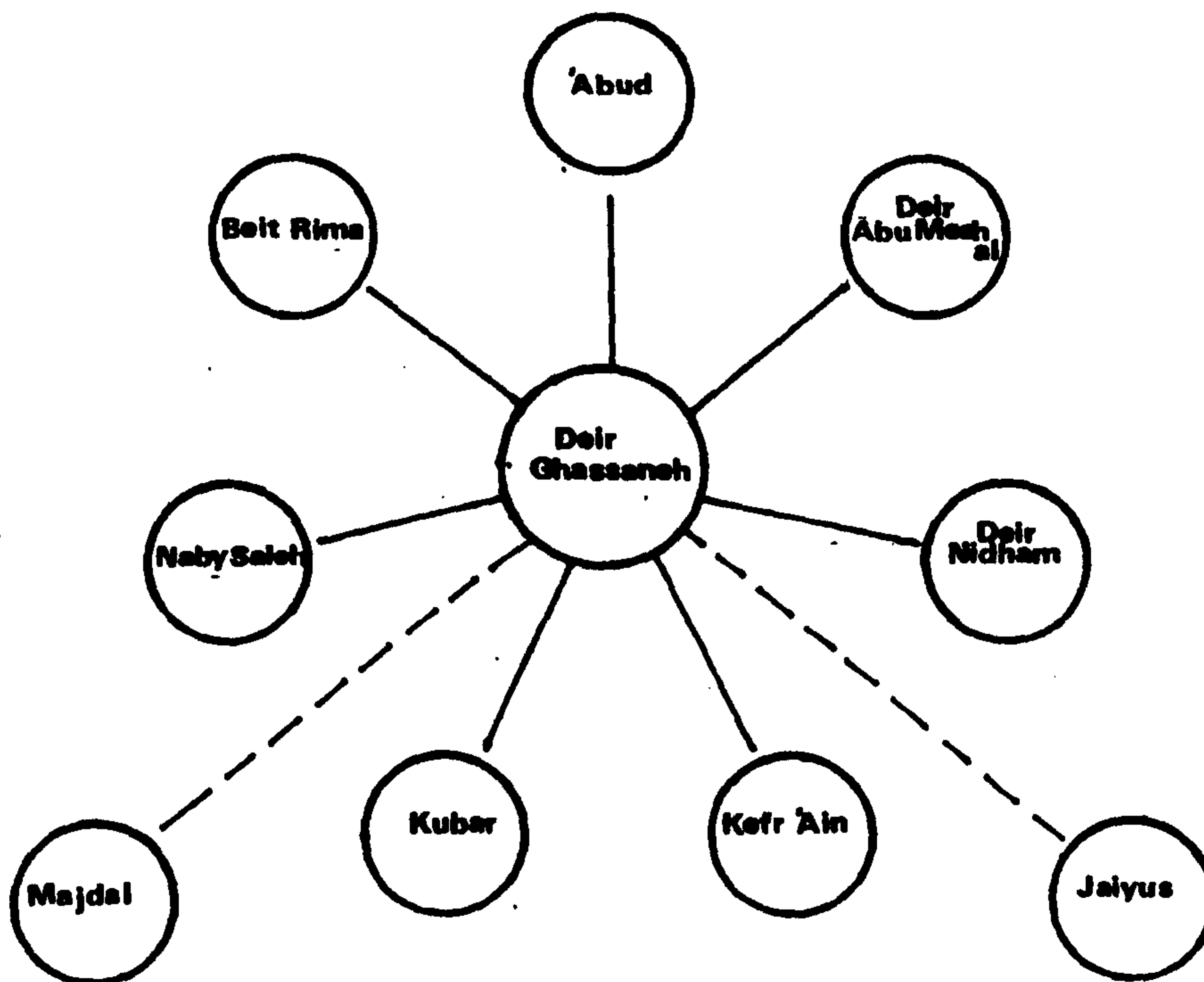


Fig.3.4: — Barghouthi villages within the Bani Zaid sheikhdome
 --- Barghouthi residents by marriage

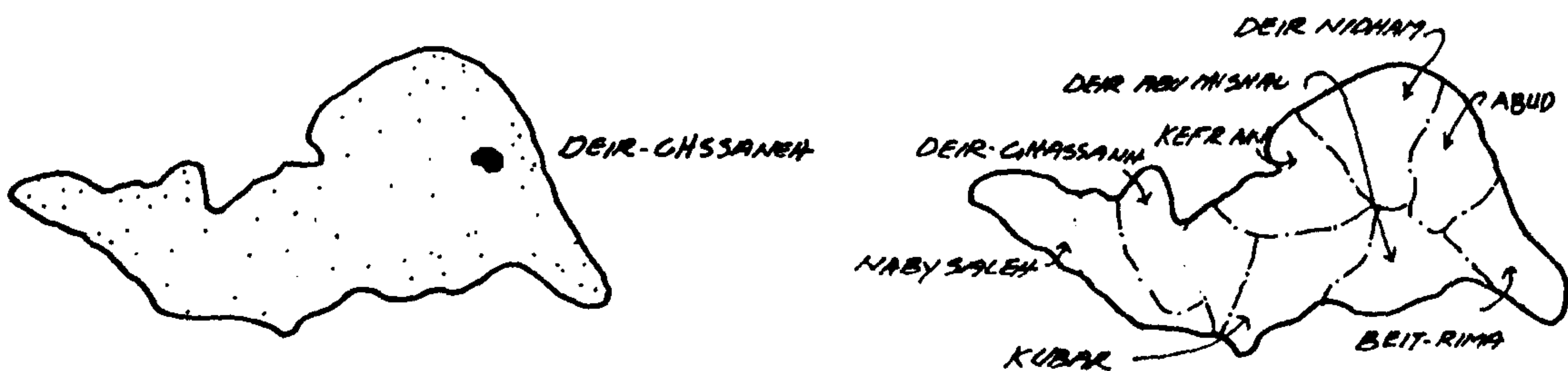


Fig.3.5a:
 The lands of Deir Ghassaneh belonging to the different descent groups

Fig.3.5b:
 The solidification of the Barghouthi lands residing in the seven different villages (hypothetical figure)

Land was the basis of livelihood and the source of wealth and prosperity for the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh. The size of the village's lands was the basis of power and prestige for the village as a whole vis-a-vis other villages. The protection of the natural resources of the village, i.e., cultivated fields, water resources, and wooded lands, were the responsibility of the village as a whole, and not only the responsibility of its owners. Whether land was communally owned (musha') or individually owned (mulk) the village had the right to object if some of the village land was alienated to villagers from outside the village. (This was the case with lands belonging to the 'Abed clan who were driven out of Deir Ghassaneh after a dispute with the Barghouthi clan. After leaving the village to reside elsewhere, the 'Abed family tried to sell their lands in Deir Ghassaneh to villagers from a neighbouring village. The inhabitants of Deir Ghassaneh were mobilized against such an act of alienating village land to "strangers" and the transaction was stopped.) Normally, the owner of the adjacent land had the privilege or right of buying it, before the sale was allowed to others in the village or to "strangers". This right was called haq al-shuf'a (the right of neighbourhood). Indirectly, the village community was considered the corporate owner of the village as a whole.

This perhaps explains the relative solidification of the village land, i.e., the village lands surrounded its core of built-up area. However, due to a number of complex reasons, which will be discussed below, every village had a share of its lands located within lands belonging to other villages, referred to as detached areas. (According to Granot "the exact meaning of detached areas is that within the boundaries of one village are to be found stretches belonging to owners who reside in another village" (Granot, 1952: 166)).

As figure 3.6 illustrates, the village of Deir Ghassaneh owned a number of detached pieces of land in a number of villages; Kefr ed-Dik, Brokin, Kefr 'Ain and, Beit Rima. It also owned some in Khirbet Mismar, Deir Ballut and stretches of land in the coastal plane (not shown on figure 3.6). However, the only village which had land

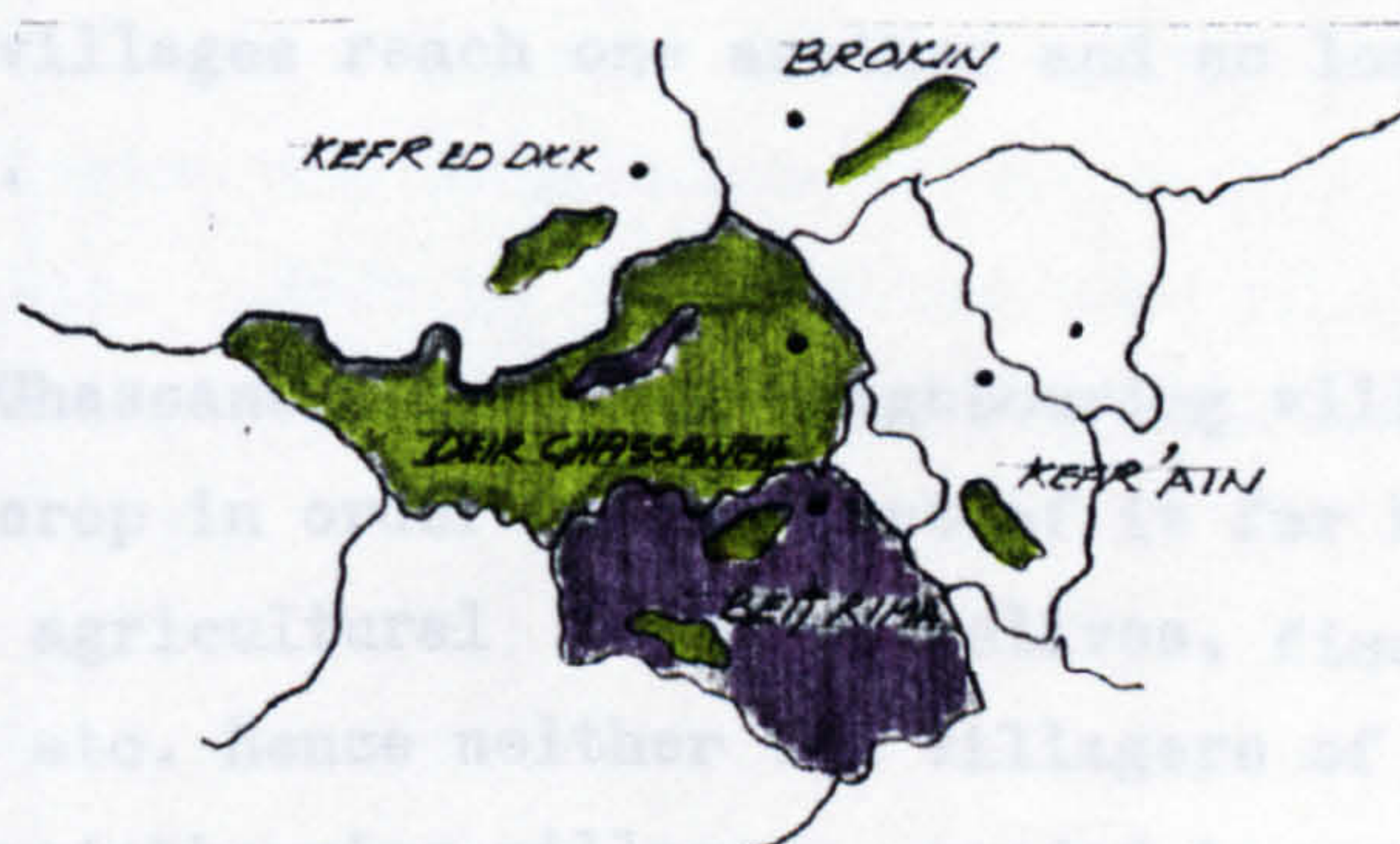


Fig. 3.6: ■ Indicates detached lands which belong to Deir Ghassaneh but are located within neighbouring villages.

■ Indicates detached lands which belong to Beit Rima but are located within Deir Ghassaneh's lands.

within the lands of Deir Ghassaneh was the neighbouring village of Beit Rima.

In The Land System in Palestine Granot writes:

A number of causes have led to this scattering of landownership. The chief of them was changes in the family, such as marriages between the inhabitants of one village and those of another, or the bequeathing of property rights to heirs who do not live in the place where it is situated. Another cause was the ordinary transfer of immovable property by sale and purchase" (Granot, 1952: 166).

Except for this phenomenon of detached areas which were relatively small, the lands of Deir Ghassaneh were clearly defined and hence created a distinct area with clear boundaries.

The scarcity of fertile arable lands, played an important role in the compact pattern of habitations within settlements. Under the prevailing land tenure, no private or public buildings, except for holy shrines and field storage structures (kosour or 'amarah), were

allowed to be constructed outside the village built-up area, out in the fields. (This is no longer the case today, hence the village houses and other public buildings have spread out. As a result neighbouring villages reach one another and no longer form a separate spatial unit).

Neither Deir Ghassaneh nor other neighbouring villages specialized in growing one crop in order to use part of it for barter. They all had similar agricultural produce: olives, figs, grapes, almonds, wheat, barley etc. Hence neither the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh, nor villagers in neighbouring villages, needed to seek beyond their own area for the fulfillment of their own subsistence needs. This pattern of cultivation obviously contributed to the very bounded, self-contained conceptualization which the villagers had of their own village.

However, non-physical factors undoubtedly played a major role in the formation of a concentrated settlement. As the individual was part of a tightly knit group, so was the individual house part of a tightly knit settlement. The same cultural system which made the individual and his clan act as a unit, made the house and the settlement a whole which formed the setting for a communal life. The individual's attitudes towards his group, his personal relation to his land, his attitude towards nature in general, his family and clan structure, all contributed to the formation of a concentrated village. Such a pattern satisfied his basic human need of belonging to a group which gave him psychological, social and economic security. As the individual in the village had little place outside his clan context, so did a separate house have little place or sense outside the setting and context of the village as a whole. As C. Norberg-Schulz put it, "Density thus seems motivated also from within. In general it corresponds to what is usually known as human scale" (Norberg-Schulz, 1971: 30). Hence the motivation for a highly clustered settlement lies in more than purely physical factors.

Finally, one can suggest that such a pattern of settlements characterised by the spatial unity of each village, was caused by,

and, at the same time reflected the nature of village internal relations. Such relations were characterised by strong social ties and a strong village affiliation which in turn produced a situation in which the different clans of the same village interacted with one another both inside the boundaries of the village built-up area and out in the fields. Such an interaction took place in isolation from other villages and even in isolation from related clans residing in neighbouring villages.

The self-contained and bounded conceptualization, which the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh had of their own village, also reflected the fact that the village, and not any other social unit, constituted the basic administrative unit which the state, through the mediation of the sheikh and the council of elders, utilized to assign lands, to organize military conscription and most importantly, to impose taxes.

THE VILLAGE AS TAX-FARMING UNIT

The system of taxation employed by the Ottoman Empire, can be seen as one factor which also enhanced the sense of a "village community". The village was used by the state as a unit of assessment for taxation. The village community as a whole was made collectively responsible for the payment of taxes. The sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh, who was also the sheikh of Bani Zaid (sheikh-el-nahiyeh), served officially as a tax farmer (multazim). He was held responsible for collecting a predetermined sum from the Bani Zaid villages. Each local sheikh (sheikh-el-balad), with the help of his council of elders, was responsible for the payment of the sum required from his village. The sheikh and his council of elders were to settle issues related to the amount required from each family. Amnon Cohen describes this process:

"Thus within the village itself, the distribution of the tax burden among the inhabitants was left to the shaykh-al-balad, who would determine how much each individual villager had to contribute towards the sum owed by his particular village." (1973: 197).

Such a system of collective responsibility suggests that the co-ordination and solidarity between the villagers as a whole would be enhanced. Not only did the villagers share the crushing burdens of impositions, but they often shared a collective punishment in case of failure to fulfill the payment of the taxes. Many villages suffered from the state soldiers when they came to harass and plunder villages which failed to pay their share of taxes (Firestone, 1978: 827).

THE VILLAGE FIELD: A DIFFERENTIATED AND STRUCTURED SPACE



Fig.3.7: Village fields

The village of Deir Ghassaneh is surrounded by a continuous series of extending mountainous rocky landscape. Except for the extensive terracing of olive groves, which gives the landscape a containable dimension of human scale, the fields seem, to the eye of the external observer, to be undifferentiated and unstructured; no physical boundaries separate Deir Ghassaneh's agricultural fields from those of neighbouring villages, no physical boundaries separate the village built-up area from its field, no boundaries differentiate the various lineage group's landholdings and no boundaries exist to mark where one fallah's property starts and where it ends.

However, in the fallah's mind, this seemingly amorphous landscape was spatially differentiated and structured. For him, who spent the long hours of his daily work within the boundaries of the village fields, the natural landscape was transformed into a "cultural

landscape" through his own intervention.

The fallah had a cognitive map of spatial divisions which stressed a multiplicity of differentiating criteria, each separating the boundaries of land on one basis and uniting it on another base. The criteria differentiating these divisions were overlapping and thus constituted a confusing network to the external observer, but become clear once they are established in the peasant's frame of reference: cardinal points, localities, landmarks, kinship domains, ecological domains, and seasonal agricultural cycles.

Abu Ziad who is ninety-eight years old today, explained the different elements which constituted a comprehensive system of identification and orientation. The following is based on his remarks, with confirmation from other elderly men in the village.

Cardinal points and locations

In addition to geographic areas, such as mountains, valleys, wadis, gorges, etc., cardinal points were an important point of reference to "map" the village lands. The village land was divided into four cardinal parts. Each part was referred to as a "face" (wejeh). The four cardinal parts in turn were sub-divided into a number (42) of smaller basins each referred to by a specific name (Fig.3.11 & 6.12).

Landmarks ("nodes")

Another system of notation referred to landmarks of a communal, mostly spiritual nature: the holy shrines (sheikh el Rifa'i, el-khawas, and Rijal sufa), haunted springs ('ain Bunnayak, 'ain el Jadida and 'ain Hajar), and the holy trees (sheikh Berri and el-Majdoub) (Fig. 6.12). Secondary landmarks which belong to the different clans such as threshing floors and water wells also functioned as objects for the fallah's orientation.

Kinship domains and footpaths

The division of the fields into a number of lineage blocks and the

sub-subdivision of these blocks into smaller parcels, belonging to the different fallaheen was another means of breaking the fields into legible and meaningful places. Here the piles of stones, rocks and trees which functioned as boundaries between the different landholdings, clearly demarcated the cultivable parcels for the fallaheen so familiar with their natural environment. A network of narrow footpaths connected all the parts into a familiar whole.

Ecological boundaries and crop-zones

Another practice was the division of land into different categories of land fertility. These divisions included fertile land, mostly located in the valleys, (Jerd el-balad); irrigated fields around the village springs (hawakir); rain-fed lands which included arbor terraces, and arid (bur) uncultivable lands. This differentiation of land according to fertility was very closely associated with the division of land into crop zones. The fields were differentiated into the various crop-zones: summer crop fields, where wheat, barley, and lentils are grown, were located in the valleys (wadi saridah); winter crops, mainly olive, were located on mountain slopes. These crop-zones dictate the direction and movements of the fallaheen at the different seasons.

Agricultural cycle

Finally, the agricultural cycle, the rhythms of which not only differentiated the cropping zones but also united all clan domains into time zones.

Hence geographical configurations, cardinal points, sacred places, patterns of land possession along kinship lines, categories of land fertility, crop zones and most important, cyclical agricultural activities, constituted the basis for spatial structuring and differentiation of the village fields.

As far as the creation of a common village identity is concerned, the multiplicity of layers defining the cognitive map of the peasant's spatial conception of village lands, belonged to a hierarchy of

significance. Within this hierarchy two layers were paramount: the cyclical agricultural activities and the prevailing patterns of ownership which entailed particular cropping arrangements. The break-up of field space into separate lineage domains was superseded by cropping arrangements which cut-across lineage lines and across lineage domains. In addition, the shared rhythms of the agricultural cycle made the village fields an arena which enhanced village identity and solidarity, as opposed to strong clan identity spatially expressed in the existence of clan-based living quarters (chapter 3). Below I will discuss these two factors in detail:

I. THE AGRICULTURAL CYCLE: TIME/SPACE/ACTIVITY

The livelihood of the villagers in Deir Ghassaneh depended on rainfed agriculture, which meant a complete dependency of the fallah on ecological factors. The calendar of the fallah was anchored into ecological changes which regulated the succession of his agricultural activities. The fallah's concept of time and space were to a great extent determined by his close relation to the environment. "Ecological time" as defined by Evans-Pritchard (1940) refers to the succession of activities both in time and place. The agricultural cycle determined factors of time and space, i.e., where the fallah must be at what time of the day or of the year. The fallah's situation in space could always be told by his situation in time. In other words, his system of time-reckoning was very closely associated with space. The cyclical nature of agricultural activities dictated a rhythmic pattern of daily and seasonal movements. Since all the fallaheen in Deir Ghassaneh were more or less involved in the same activities, time have a similar meaning for everyone within the community.

In discussions with them, the fallaheen very often referred to some activity in process in order to indicate the time of an event. For example harvest time, the season of olive picking, and the days of figs and grapes were all points of reference in time. The fallaheen also selected events of outstanding significance as common points of reference. The years of beating the drums (sant dak et-tabel) referred to 1914 where all men between the age of 15 to 60

were conscripted into the Turkish army. The year of the big snow referred to 1919; the year of immigration (sant el-hijra) refers to 1916 when the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh fled their village due to the Turkish-British battles around the village. These events were reckoned as markers of time and hence it was not easy for the fallah to translate them into specific years. (Abu Nada, Interview: 1985).

The ecological cycle not only created a pattern of similar activities and movements for the fallaheen, but also gave the community a distinct common history. The year began with the first rains in autumn. The fallah followed a twelve month year so as to order and fix his agricultural events. Unlike the

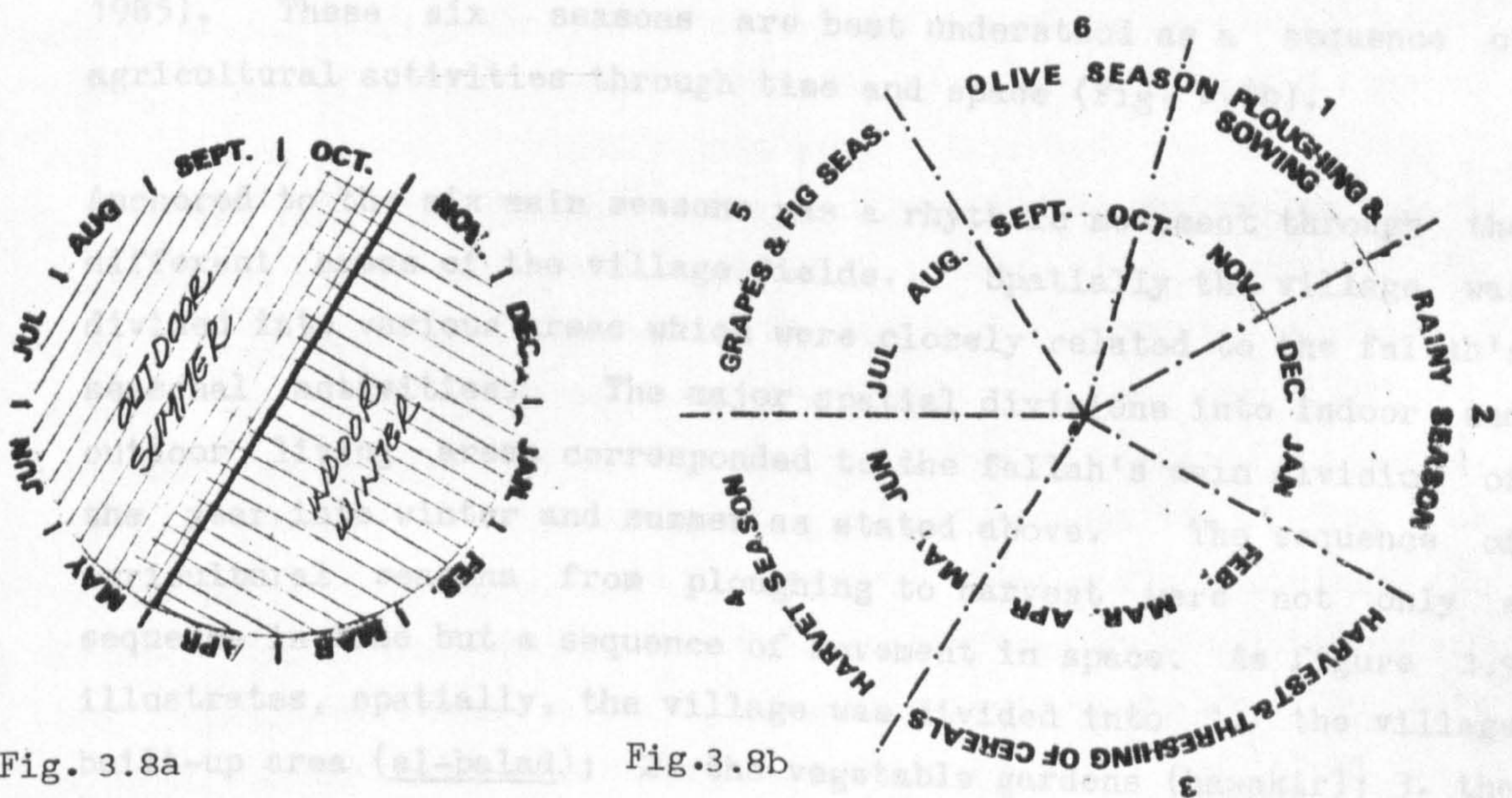


Fig. 3.8a

Fig.3.8b

Fig. 3.8a: The division of the year into two main seasons

Fig. 3.8b: The division of the year into six seasons

neighbouring Christian peasants who used the same year for fixing agricultural as well as religious events, the Moslem fallah in Deir Ghassaneh depended on the hijri lunar year to fix his religious events. For his agricultural cycle, the Palestinian fallah adopted the Julian year - taken from the Syrian year - because it is anchored in the cyclical ecological changes (which is not the case with the Moslem hijri calendar). The fallah's calendar was (and to great extent still is) a relation between a conceptual cycle of 12

months and a cycle of six seasons (mawasim); with each, certain activities were associated. The fallah's system of time-reckoning was more meaningful as a sequence of agricultural activities - from planting to harvest - rather than the conceptual division of the year into 12 months. The fallah divided the year roughly into two halves; the winter (esh-shta) and the summer (es-saif) which also corresponded to spatial divisions of indoor and outdoor (Fig. 3.8a). This spatial division is clearly expressed in the saying of the Christian fallah "celebrate Easter and live outside, celebrate the Elevation of the Holy Cross and live inside" ('ayed w etla', salleb we-adhul). The two main seasons were again subdivided into six seasons (Nasir, 1975: 70; and Abu Nada and Abu Adnan, interviews: 1985). These six seasons are best understood as a sequence of agricultural activities through time and space (Fig. 3.8b).

Anchored to the six main seasons was a rhythmic movement through the different areas of the village fields. Spatially the village was divided into various areas which were closely related to the fallah's seasonal activities. The major spatial divisions into indoor and outdoor living areas corresponded to the fallah's main division of the year into winter and summer as stated above. The sequence of agricultural seasons from ploughing to harvest were not only a sequence in time but a sequence of movement in space. As figure 3.9 illustrates, spatially, the village was divided into 1. the village built-up area (el-balad); 2. the vegetable gardens (hawakir); 3. the arbor terraces; 4. and the valley for cereal plantations (wadi sarid). All along the year the fallah moved from one area to another trying to keep up with the pressing demands of the land.

Figure 3.10 illustrates the fallah's movement through the year and the close association between activity / time and space.

During the plowing season (mawsim el-hrath), October-November, the fallah spent most of his time in the valley, while he remained mostly in the village during the rainy season (mawsim el-matar). The rainy season months December-February were referred to as the barren months (el-Jurd). In the sunny winter days, the fallah spent the time repairing terraces and planting trees. The fallah moved mostly

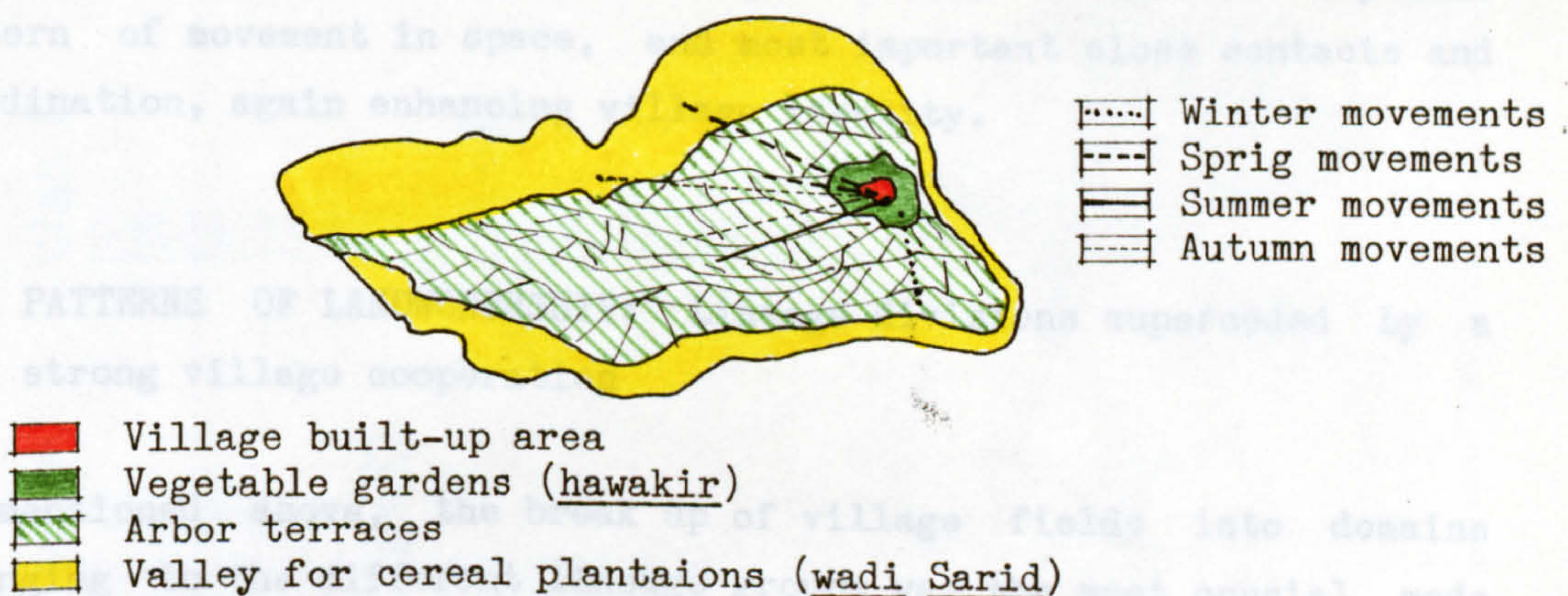


Fig. 3.9: Close association between activity/time / space

about mostly during the grain harvest and threshing season, March-May. The first two months were spent on arbor terraces ploughing and pruning trees. "In May take your sickle and cut with vigor" goes the fallaheen saying. During harvest time the fallah spent consecutive days in the valleys so as to harvest and thresh the grains. During this season, the fallah also covered the vineyards, picked the fruit trees on the terraces and went to the vegetable gardens (hawakir). During the wheat and barley season, June-July, the same pattern was followed, i.e., spending most the time in the valley while visiting the arbor terraces. During the grapes and fig season, August-September, the fallah abandoned both the valley and the village and almost entirely lived on the terraces so as to keep up with the hard work of picking figs and grapes. The ta'zib i.e., moving out to live in the terrace houses called 'amarah or kaser, was done on a limited scale in Deir Ghassaneh. Unlike other villages where the whole family left the village temporarily to live in the fields, in Deir Ghassaneh only men lived there and only for few days.

During the festive season of olive picking (mawsim talkit ezatoon), the end of the agricultural cycle, the fallah accompanied by all his male relatives, unmarried daughters and elderly women, and sometimes hired labour from other villages, spent the time moving back and forth between olive terraces and the village.

Thus, the cyclical agricultural activities gave all members of the

village community a shared meaning of time, a similar rhythmic pattern of movement in space, and most important close contacts and coordination, again enhancing village identity.

II. PATTERNS OF LANDWONERSHIP: Lineage divisions superceded by a strong village cooperation

As mentioned above, the break up of village fields into domains belonging to the different lineage groups was the most crucial mode of orientation and identification of field space.

As figure 3.10 illustrates, there was a clear correlation between land distribution and lineage. In other words, land holdings were grouped in a number of blocks owned by members of the same lineage. For example, most of the fields located in the south-west were owned by the Rabi clan, while fields located in the north-east were mostly owned by the Shu'aibi clan. Although generally speaking land holdings were divided along lineage lines, in most cases the holdings of the same lineage were not solidified in one large continuous parcel, but consisted of a number of parcels spread out in different places in the village. The break up of lineage blocks was quite common.

The same pattern i.e., scattering and splitting up of land holdings characterized the holdings of the individual fallah. Figure illustrates the holdings of one fallah from the 'Alem family. The holdings of this fallah - like the majority of other fallahen - were also made up of several parcels some of which were at a distance from one another. It was very rare that the holdings of the one fallah formed one single continuous parcel. The causes of such a pattern were explained by Granot:

"The fundamental cause of the fragmentation of holdings in the Arab village lies in the fact that the fallah aspires to include in his holdings land of all the categories - as regards quality of the soil which are found in that village."

Kinship & the Pattern of Land Distribution Kufr Al-Ma 1960

note: This map illustrates patterns of parcelisation and fragmentation of cultivated land along kinship boundaries in the village studied by Antoun (1972).

Land parcels are not registered in Deir Ghassaneh so a similar map can not be drawn for the village, but this map should illustrate the similar pattern that prevailed in Deir Ghassaneh.

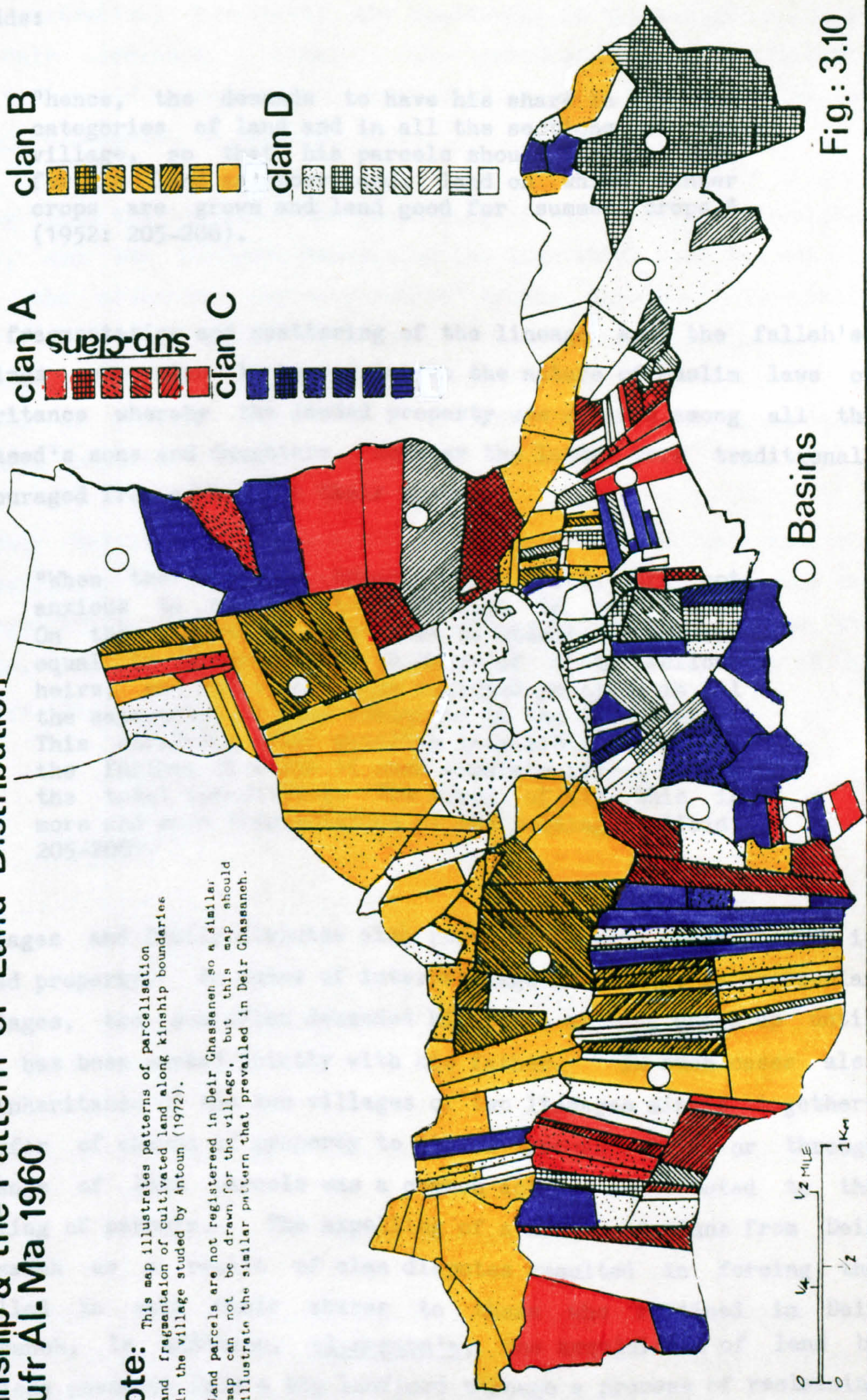


Fig.: 3.10

he adds:

"hence, the demands to have his share in all the categories of land and in all the sections of the village, so that his parcels should include both fertile land and poor land, land on which winter crops are grown and land good for summer crops." (1952: 205-206).

The fragmentation and scattering of the lineage and the fallah's holdings were also increased due to the nature of Muslim laws of inheritance whereby the landed property was divided among all the deceased's sons and daughters. However the latter were traditionally discouraged from asking for their shares.

"When the division comes, the heirs, are not anxious to receive their portion in one piece. On the contrary, they seek to obtain a holding equal in every respect to those of their fellow-heirs, and insist on being assigned portions in all the categories of land contained in the inheritance. This straining after equality inevitably leads to the further division of each separate parcel within the total inheritance. The result of all this is more and more fragmentation of the holdings". (Ibid: 205-206).

Marriages and family disputes also resulted in more fragmentation in landed property. In cases of inter-village marriages, or cross-clan marriages, the son often demanded his share of land which up until then has been worked jointly with his father. In such cases also the inheritance of the two villages or two lineages mingle together. Transfer of shares of property to others through selling or through exchange of land parcels was a common act and contributed to the mingling of parcels. The expelling of a number of clans from Deir Ghassaneh as a result of clan disputes resulted in forcing the expelled to sell their shares to those who remained in Deir Ghassaneh. In addition, al-muzara'a, the acquisition of land by landless peasants from a big landlord through a process of reclaiming uncultivated land, usually involved the arboring of poor land over a number of years, after which a portion of the land and the trees - usually one-half - was granted to the peasant cultivator. Through

this contractual agreement, the scattering of the fallah holdings obviously increased. Finally, the scattering of the fallah's holdings could possibly be a remnant of a pre-existing system of musha' allocation (Rosenfeld, 1970).

Taking into consideration the scattering of land holdings described above, and the periodic demands of the land which must be met on time, the necessity for cooperation became absolute, especially under conditions whereby any neglect or lack of coordination or cooperation between neighbouring parcels must be paid for dearly in reduced or perhaps ruined crops. Hence success in agriculture demanded cooperation amongst villagers.

In Deir Ghassaneh, the area of cultivated land was vast and the accessibility to distant areas was difficult, especially because the village built-up area was not centrally located in relation to its fields. (Most of the village fields were located to the west of the village (Fig. 3.11)).

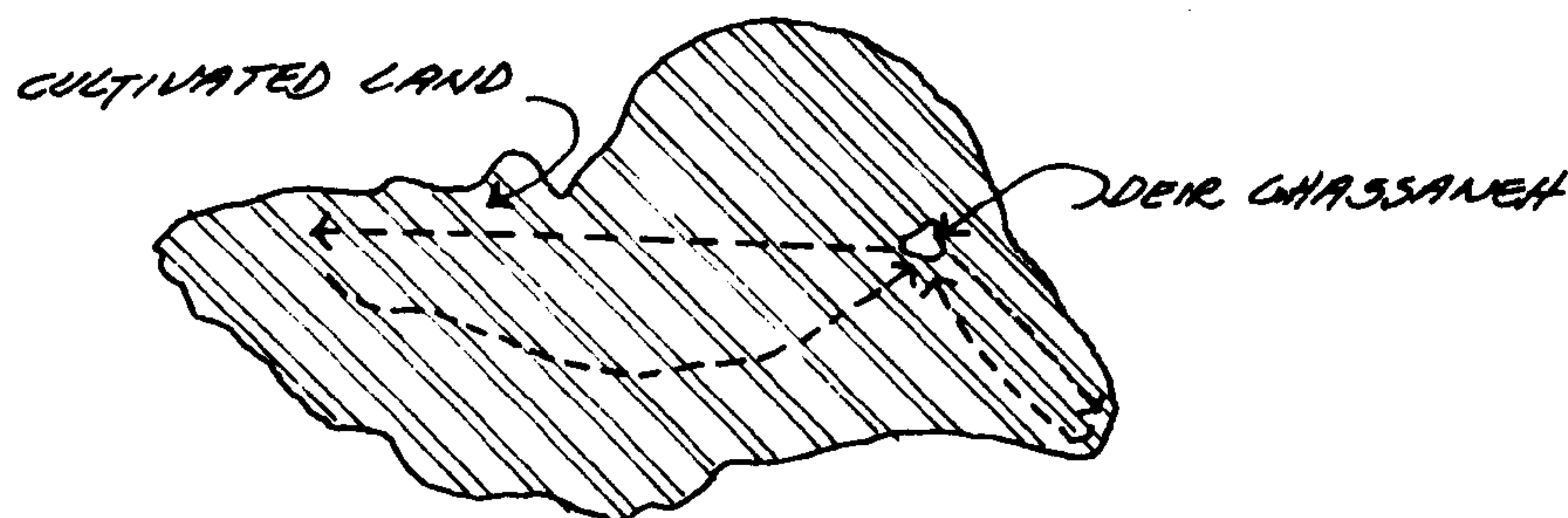


Fig. 3.11: The majority of the village fields were located to the west

----- distance walked back and forth daily .

Under this pattern of land distribution, where each fallah had distant and nearby parcels of land, the villagers interaction with one another was much more than if landholdings had been solidified into one continuous block. The fallahs spent relatively long hours walking back and forth between their different parcels and hence their interaction and encounters were maximized.

Since blocks were subdivided into long and narrow strips (mawaris), access to one's parcel was frequently only through other fallah's lots. Foot paths cut across the different holdings. This entailed extensive criss-crossing by the tiller over neighbouring plots. No one could forbid others from passing through his "property". In fact there was never "public" foot paths as such, nor was there distinct demarcations or clear boundaries where one's property started or ended. The demarcations were usually one or two stones, or often trees.

Cooperation in times of ploughing, planting and harvesting was expected under such a pattern of land distribution, even though unlike other villages Deir Ghassaneh did not have fixed dates for planting and harvesting set by the village council of elders (Antoun, 1972: 21).

Cropping Arrangements

The prevailing land tenure pattern which entailed the proximity of land holdings and the "elbow-brushing" in the course of carrying out day-to-day activities, were not the only factors which resulted in the villagers cooperation and extensive interaction. Complex cropping arrangements also cut across family and clan lines.

Private plots (or more accurately, plots to which the peasants had inherited rights) were normally worked by the extended family. However, the differential status of land holdings in Deir Ghassaneh was quite distinct. Hence the poorer families contracted themselves through share-tenancy or wage labour to richer clans. Almost all wealthy families such as the Saleh and 'Ashweh owned or had access to land which was in excess of their ability to crop directly (through their own family labour, or through supervised hired hands), and that they leased or farmed out.

Share-tenancy and wage labour were a prevalent system by which landless or poor peasants with small plots sold their family's labour to crop the land of rich peasants with access to surplus lands. The share contract usually stipulated the provision by the landlord of

seedstock, land and water against the labour of the share-tenant who received a portion of the harvest ranging from one-fourth to one-half the crop. A complex variety of contracts (mostly oral) prevailed depending on the crop and the strength of kinship and or filial ties bonding the landlord to the share-tenant (Firestone, 1978).

Not all forms of cropping arrangements were vertical and contractual. Family allocation of labour to other farmers often took the form of mutual aid in a system known as 'auneh. The 'auneh was extended to farmers who were in need of extra help because of seasonal demand on a basis of reciprocity. Villagers would usually volunteer one day of work. Wilson notes:

"...people will also not unfrequently help friends and neighbours to get in their harvest. Especially is this the case if one has finished before another, or if anything delays the threshing. Sometimes a dozen or more men and women may thus be seen in line reaping, and it is astonishing to note the rate at which they will clear the ground".

He adds

"In the case of friendly help from neighbours, the Fallah, on the conclusion of the threshing, makes a feast to which he invites all who have given him any assistance in getting his crops. The feast is called Jeerah" (Wilson, 1906: 217).

The same basis of mutual help was applied to the building of a new house (see chapter 4). It should be noted, however, that whether the cropping arrangements were vertical and exploitative in nature or horizontal and mutual, they both - especially the former - cut across family and clan ties and created close patterns of interactions, enhanced by the cyclical activities of agricultural production.

CHAPTER FOUR

VILLAGE QUARTERS: SOCIAL AND SPATIAL DIMENSIONS



Fig. 4.1: The village of Deir Ghassaneh

Deir Ghassaneh occupies the top of a hill, spreading out on its eastern and western slopes. Seen from a distance, the village appears as a compact unit of white stone. This dense settlement contrasts strongly with the indefinitely extended rocky mountainous landscape around it. The ancient appearance of the village structures, and the neatly organised stone terraces which surround the village give the feeling that the fallah has found an "anchorage" in this site for hundreds of years. The silhouette of the village with its many rounded domes (fig. 4.1) is in sharp contrast with the bright blue skies. On the one hand, the vertical Barghouthi buildings accentuate the vertical direction and give a feeling that the village "rises" up (to use Norberg-Schulz's term) towards the skies. The verticalism finds an echo in the domes of the Barghouthi buildings occupying the top of the hill. On the other hand, the horizontal stone buildings of the fallaheen seem to be an extension of the surrounding landscape. The "hugging of the earth" is emphasized by the heavy and massive stone buildings. The horizontal expansion of the buildings located on slopes, expresses a strong relationship between the natural landscape and man-made environment. The closeness to earth is one striking aspect of the village. The natural landscape penetrates all levels

of the village. The terraced fields, the blue skies, the bright sunlight and the white stone houses with domes all combine to make a particularly powerful environment. The natural landscape is still very strong and determines the general milieu.

Boundaries Defining the Village Built-Up Area

Similar to most other Palestinian villages, Deir Ghassaneh never had walls around it to define its boundaries. The boundary between man-made space and natural space was achieved by the sharp difference in density between the compact built-up area and the open surrounding fields. The fields were almost free from man-made structures, except for the storage huts (ksour) used for guarding against thieves during the fig and grape seasons and for storage of agricultural produce. The hawakir, a belt of empty lots, constituted a clear geographical boundary and a natural edge between the densely built man-made settlement and the partly natural, partly ordered landscape (fig. 4.2).

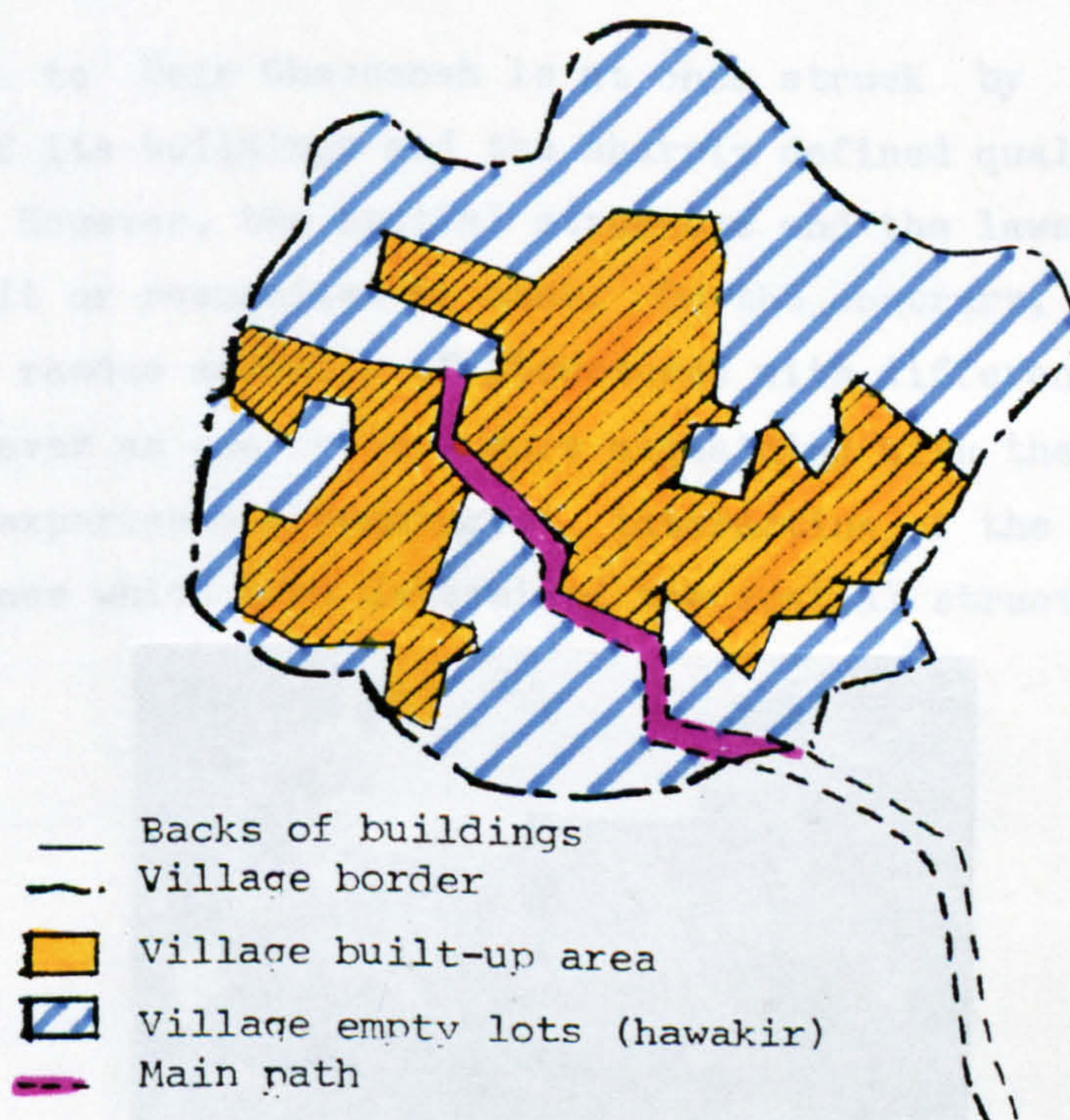


Fig. 4.2: A belt of empty lots (hawakir) separated the village built-up area from fields around it

In addition to empty lots, which were generally used for the construction of new houses and as vegetable gardens, the hawakir included the village cemeteries which were also part of the barrier defining the boundaries of the built-up area. The back of the many inwardly-looking buildings located at the peripheries of the village also defined a critical boundary which signified a psychological and sociologically meaningful interior into which the fallah could withdraw after long hours of work in the open, ever extending fields. The three elements namely; density differentiation, empty lots(hawakir) and backs of buildings, all acted simultaneously so as to define the village's outermost boundaries (fig. 4.2).

Although the village is densely built with a defined boundary, it still had a transparency which allowed for the penetration of the village from all directions. However, the village "formal" entrance is located to the west of the village. This was also the formal entrance to the village's main plaza.

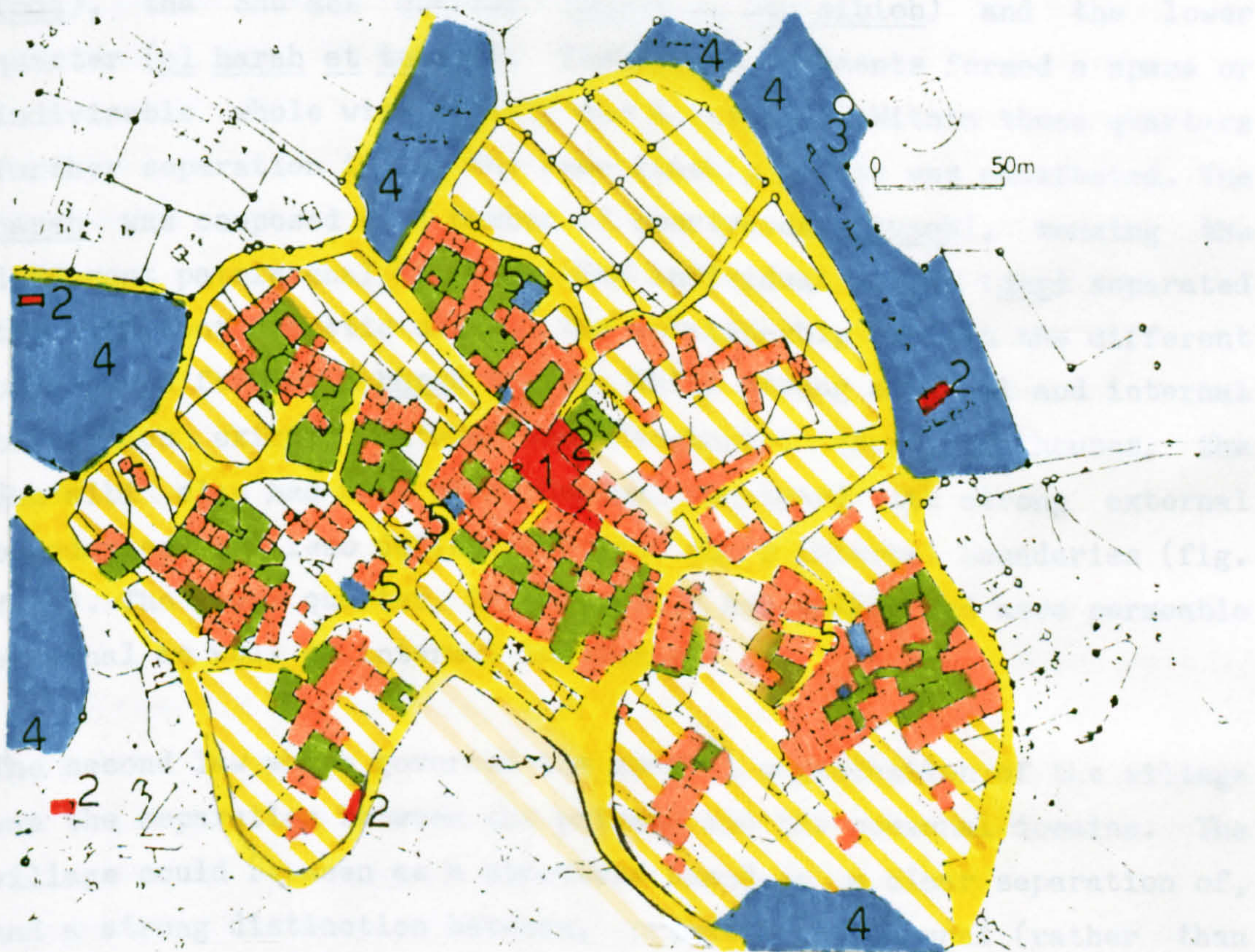
SEPARATION AND UNITY: Principles Guiding Spatial Organisation

The visitor to Deir Ghassaneh is at once struck by the imposing character of its buildings and the sharply defined quality of spaces (fig. 4.3). However, the spatial structure and the laws governing it cannot be felt or recognized at once. On the contrary, at first it seems ~~to~~ be a random assembly of structures with different styles and scales. However as one becomes more acquainted with the village, one starts to experience a meaningful interaction of the natural and cultural forces which have determined the spatial structure.



Fig. 4.3: Imposing character and quality of spaces and buildings

A closer examination of the village lay-out reveals a spatial structure which was dictated by two countervailing principles; separation and unity. At one level, the peasants organised their spaces so as to maintain a hierarchical order of differentiation based on : 1) separation along kinship lines, 2) separation based on gradation of privacy, and 3) separation between genders, determining clear lines of labour division. A village-wide inter-kin network of solidarity, also reflected itself in the village lay-out, superceded



- Village quarters based along kinship lines
- Private courtyards based on separation along extended family lines
- Empty lots (hawakir) acted as separation edges
- Village paths network
- Structures which partially cut across kinship lines: Olive presses (5) and cemeteries (4)
- Community buildings which cut across all kinship lines
1. Village communal plaza and guest-house 2. village sacred places

Fig. 4.4: Separation along kinship and gender lines were the main principles that dictated village spatial organisation

the separation based on kinship, privacy, and gender.

The separation of the different kinship groups was marked by the ordering of certain elements: spaces, buildings, alleys, landscape features. The main structural feature of the village lay-out was its division into three primary kin-based quarters (harat); the Barghouthi quarter referred to as the upper quarter (el harah el foqa), the Shu'abi quarter (harat el Shu'aibieh) and the lower quarter (el harah et tehtah). These three segments formed a space or indivisible whole with variety and diversity. Within these quarters further separation inside the same kinship groups was manifested. The harah was composed of a number of courtyards (ahwash), housing the different patriarchal families. The individual houses (dur) separated the different domestic units. The relationship between the different courtyards forming a harah varied. While strong external and internal boundaries existed between the Barghouthi courtyard houses, the Shu'aibi clan had more of a communal courtyard with strong external boundaries and less defined and less sharp internal boundaries (fig. 4.32). The lower quarter, in contrast, had weaker and more permeable external as well as internal boundaries.

The second law which governed the spatial organisation of the village was the separation between the private and the communal domains. The village could be seen as a structure based on a clear separation of, and a strong distinction between, private and communal (rather than public) domains governed by strong rules of segregation.

The visitor to Deir Ghassaneh receives the impression that the clustered inwardly-looking village did not reveal its spaces all at once in its heyday. One has the feeling that what was hidden seemed to have been much more than what was directly perceived. Spaces had a "layered" quality. This layering went on seemingly forever. The existing privacy gradient created a feeling that one could not enter into every space. There were strong rules and restrictions on the degree of penetration one was allowed, depending on his/her relation to the group or individual residing there. Strong rules and distinctive physical boundaries created the visible communal and the invisible private spaces. Interiority and exclusivity were two strong

characteristics of Deir Ghassaneh. The structure facilitated desirable or wanted interactions, while controlling and hindering undesirable and unwanted intrusions. Between the village communal plaza(saha) and the interior of the house, existed a number of places varying in the degree of their privacy.

The separation between males and females was the third principle which guided the spatial organisation of the village and defined its structure. The differential status of women which characterised the village of Deir Ghassaneh influenced the spatial structure of the village as a whole, and that of each quarter. For most of the Barghouthi women who stayed at home, the high walls surrounding the interior courtyard (hosh) marked the boundary of their everyday world (except for the special festive occasions such as marriages and religious ceremonies). The fallaheen women's world extended beyond the boundaries of their courtyards only as they took part in certain well defined agricultural activities.

The network of village inter-kin solidarity was reinforced through a shared cultural and religious heritage, through the communal imposition of tax burdens, and through the collective coordination dictated by the existing cropping arrangements (discussed earlier). The villagers also spatially fostered forms of inter-kin solidarity by creating "centres of activities" which cut partially or totally across kinship lines. While some centres, like the village threshing floors (el baiader), the olive presses, cemeteries and local shops were often shared by two sub-clans, other centres such as the village plaza and guest-house, the village religious buildings, mosque and holy sanctuaries, and the village main spring ('ain el-jdeideh) cut across all kinship lines. Although these centres varied in the nature of activities that took place in them, they all played a role in strengthening village identity and unity as opposed to a strong kinship affiliation and separation. The most important and dominant centre of activity was the communal plaza(sahat el balad). This distinct and remarkable place played a significant role in the social and political life of the community (chapter 6). It was undoubtedly the basic point of reference for most of the villagers, particularly the men.

The village "sacred environment" - defined here as the totality of sacred places, sacred times and sacred ceremonies- formed a kind of socio-religious and political grid which interwove with the "profane" environment and acted as an egalitarian force for the unity of this muslim community (chapter 6).

The women of Deir Ghassaneh, who were totally excluded from the village's two main centres of activities - the village plaza and mosque - found in the main spring ('ain el-jdeideh) a communal centre for women where they met daily and exchanged news.

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION AND SPATIAL HIERARCHY

Since Deir Ghassaneh was the throne village of the Bani Zaid district, social stratification in this village was much more distinct than that in any other neighbouring Bani Zaid village. Deir Ghassaneh was socially as well as spatially divided into two main groups of clearly unequal status, namely the Barghouthis and the fallaheen. The dominance of the Barghouthis and the subordination of the fallaheen was manifested by the fact that almost all village disputes over power occurred between the different Barghouthi families, (particularly between the Saleh and Abdul Aziz families, both from the Daher subclan) and not between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen. The fallaheen were divided, tacitly supporting one or the other of the Barghouthi rival groups. It was understood that the fallaheen of the lower quarter had allegiance to the Dawood sub-clan, while the Shu'abis had allegiance to the Daher sub-clan.

Kinship "clustering" in living quarters was based on social "homogeneity". The criterion for homogeneity was belonging to the same ancestor. The ideology of genealogy played an important and active role in the unity of kins i.e., the unity of members who believed themselves to be the descendants of the same agnatic ancestor. While "common origins" strengthened unity amongst members of the same clan, it set them apart from other clans. In most cases, claims of origins could hardly be demonstrated by members of the clan; not only that, they mostly lacked any logical sequence in time

and event. What is of concern to us in these legendary historic tales is their social functions. They are also an important indication of the nature of relations between the different clan groups. It is important to observe the discrepancies in how the same group was seen by members of the clan and by members of other clans. The stories describing the Barghouthis and the means by which they took possession of most of the village lands is a good example to illustrate this point.

As far as the Barghouthis were concerned, they believed themselves to be of noble descent. They claimed direct descent from the second Khaliphate of Omar. They came to Jerusalem with the famed muslim leader, Salah ed Din el-Ayoubi, and settled in the holy city of Jerusalem until they were appointed as rulers of the Bani Zaid region by the Zahir Babers in the sixteenth century (Wilson, 1906: 78, Macalister, 1923; 355, and Barghouthi, manuscript: n.d.). There was very little doubt in the Barghouthis' minds that their economic monopolies and social privileges were the result of noble origins. They saw themselves as the true muslim Arab knights, as opposed to the fallaheen who lacked honourable and noble origins.

However the fallaheen on their part, held the Barghouthi stories of their clan's origins in suspicion and had their own beliefs about the history of the Barghouthis. "The Barghouthis", narrated one of the fallaheens in an interview with the author, "are of Bedouin origins". They came to Deir Ghassaneh much later than the fallaheen, erected their tents nearby and as time passed by they befriended the Tamimis, the most influential and powerful clan in Deir Ghassaneh then. Barghouth, their acclaimed ancestor, married the daughter of the Tamimi's sheikh. As time passed, Barghouth gained power and later on he betrayed his in-laws, took over all their properties, and threw them out of Deir Ghassaneh to the neighbouring village of en-Nabi Saleh. Ever since then, Barghouthis have been involved in continuous struggles for power with the different clans in the village. It was not their "noble" origins that gave them the power but their betrayal of their own people" (anonymous, interview; 1986).

Notice that the fallaheen thought of the Barghouthis as Bedouins and

not urban dwellers, as the Barghouthis claimed. In the fallah's mind it was, and still is, degrading to be of Bedouin origin.

The discrepancies in the stories about the Barghouthis' origins (the same was true about the origins of other clans) reveal to us the nature of relations that prevailed amongst the different clans, especially between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen, in the period under discussion.

THE SOCIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE HARAH

Similarities between members of the same harah was not confined only to their common ancestors as discussed above, but also to many other socio-behavioural patterns. For example the harah was seen as the spatial framework for finding eligible spouses. There was a tendency for men and women in the same clan or harah to marry. The distinct social stratification amongst the Bargouthis, the Shua'bis, and the residents of the lower quarter, imposed restrictions on inter-clan/inter-harat marriages. Marriage bound together people who were already linked by residence. In the case of the lower quarter, marriages between the different clans were quite common. This meant that marriages were mostly restricted within the same harah but not necessarily within the same clan. The recruitment of marriage deputation (jaha) was also restricted to elderly men mostly from the clan and at times from the same harah.

Visiting patterns, as a result of marriage patterns, were also restricted within the same harah. Visiting, which was mostly done by women, was restricted to their families or to their in-laws, hence movements were mostly restricted within the harah. It was only during festive occasions that visiting occurred across the different quarters.

The harah was also the political unit for mobilisation. At times of disputes, the individual expected protection primarily from members of his clan, but also from members of his harah. The elders of each harah had the responsibilities for settling such disputes. The harah

also acted as the physical context for social control. Pressure exerted against members of the clan to conform was much more effective as a result of physical proximity. The frequent encounters resulting from such proximity obviously reinforced the group's identity as it set them apart from other spatial/kinship groups.

In the following I examine how the social functions of the harat were reflected spatially in the formation and lay-out of the different living quarters.

THE VILLAGE LIVING QUARTERS (HARAT)

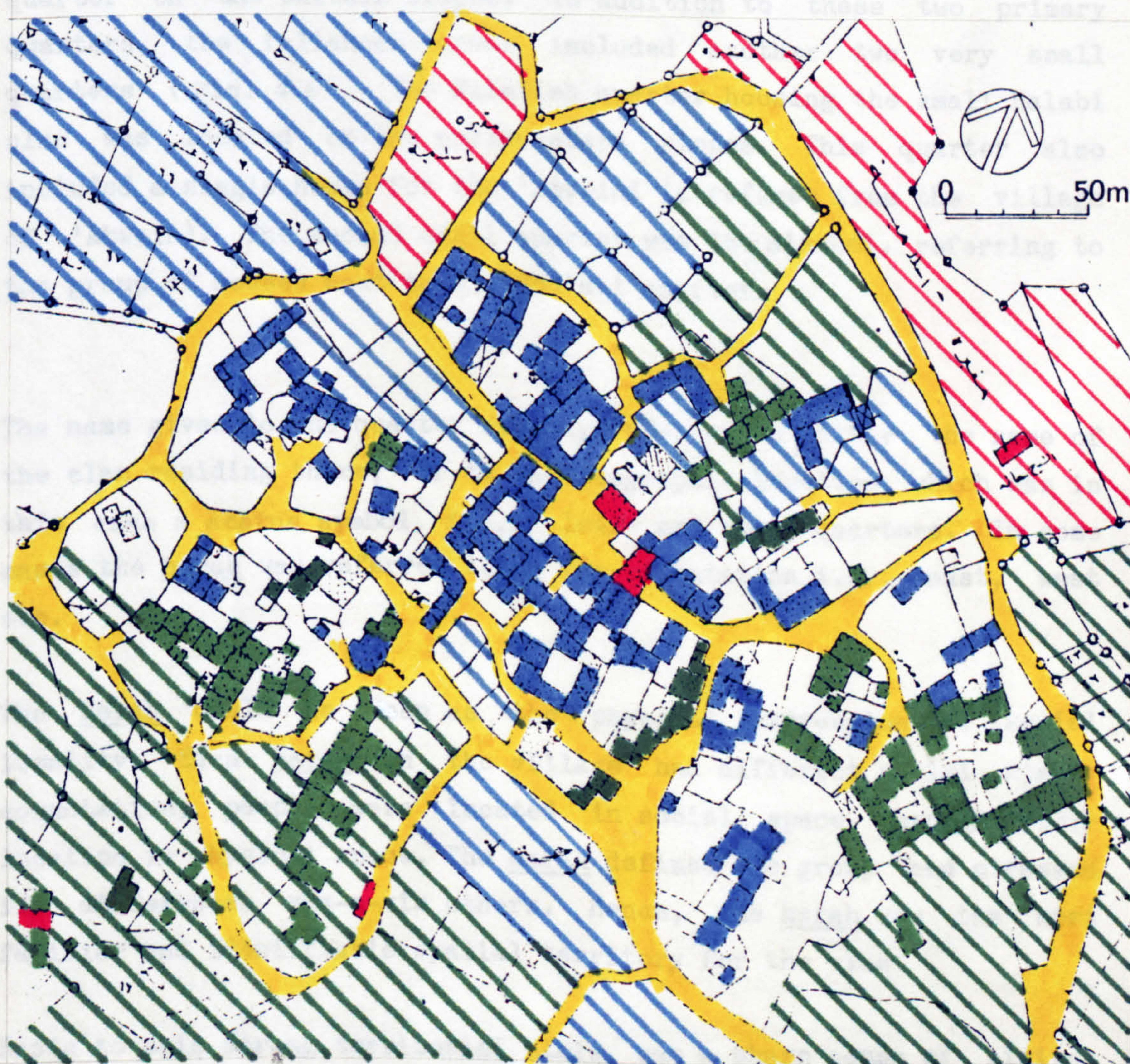


Fig. 4.5: The village was divided basically into Barghouthi areas indicated in blue, and the "fallaheen" areas indicated in green.

As discussed above, the division into different quarters was based along kinship lines as well as social stratification. As illustrated in figure 4.5, the village was, and to some extent still is, divided into two areas; the Barghouthis' and the fallaheen's. The Barghuothi area occupied the top of the hill and hence was referred to as the upper quarter (el harah el foqa). This quarter was both physically as well as symbolically higher. The fallaheen areas, which extended to the lower slopes of the hill, included two distinctive quarters. The lower quarter (el harah et tehtah) on the southern extremities, referred to a geographically low location and to the most socially deprived groups. The fallaheen areas also included the Shua'bi quarter on the eastern slopes. In addition to these two primary quarters, the fallaheen areas included another two very small quarters (Fig. 4.6). The Halabieh quarter housing the small Halabi clan was located on the northwestern slopes. This quarter also included a single house for the 'Abweini (a refugee from the village of 'Abwein). The second small quarter was the Misshel, referring to the group of houses next to the Shu'abi quarter.

The name given to the quarter usually referred to either the name of the clan residing there, or to the geographic location, which was in this case a status symbol, i.e., lower and upper quarters. In some cases the harah was referred to by its orientation i.e., east, west etc.

The harah could be seen as the physical expression of social identity. Each harah in the village had different social status connotation; people were located in social space through their location in physical space. The harah defined the group and stressed its differences vis-a-vis others. Hence, the harah was the most familiar and identifiable spatial territory for the clan.

Basic to this strong territorial claim was a sharp sense of limits. Within their own territory and with their own life style, the different kin groups were able to maintain separateness both through strong physical boundaries as well as through social and behavioural patterns.



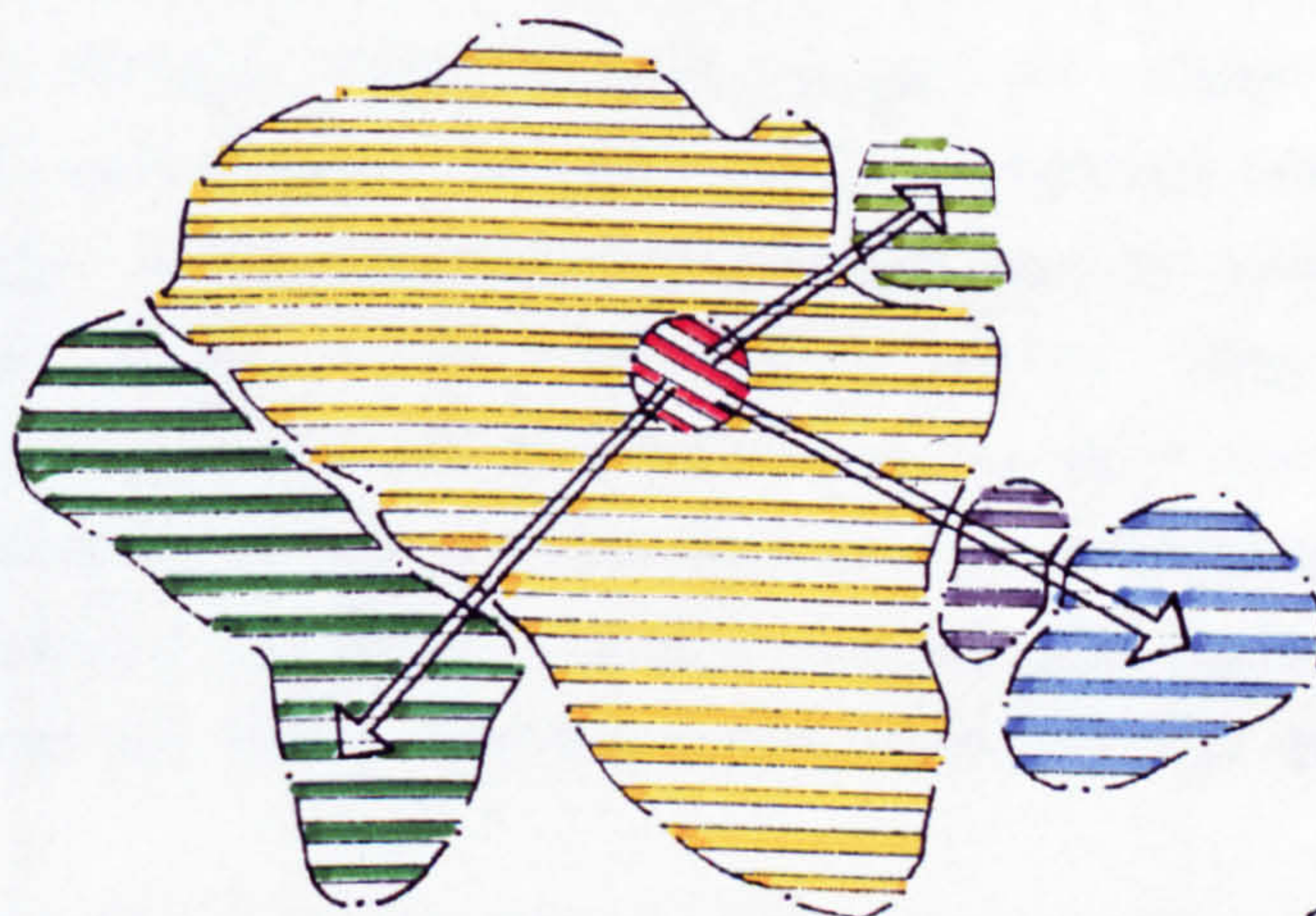
Fig. 4.6: The different living quarters

- The Barghouthi quarter
- The Shu'aibi quarter
- The Lower fallaheen quarter
- The Halabieh quarter

RELATIONSHIP TO VILLAGE CENTRE

The living quarters (harat) of the village gathered around the village plaza (saha) which constituted the very centre of the village. The plaza contained the village communal guest-house and the mosque, hence not only physically gathering the different parts of the village around it but also many social and symbolic meanings. The closeness to the saha expressed social status; higher status

groups - the Barghouthis - lived near the centre. While the sheikh's house opened directly on the saha, the fallaheen of the lower quarter lived farthest from the saha i.e., on the village outskirts, hence spatially expressing their social distance (fig. 4.7).



- Arrow indicates direction of status in descending order from centre
- Village centre (saha)
 - The Barghouthi quarter top of social hierarchy
 - Lower quarter farthest from centre expressing social distance
 - Shu'aibi quarter
 - Halabieh or el-'Alem quarter
 - Misshel quarter

Fig. 4.7: Diagram showing relationship between village centre and quarters: status ranking

Village Streets And Alleys

Behind the village centre lay a network of narrow and winding alleys which connected as well as separated the different parts of the village. Clusters and streets changed shapes and sizes according to needs. Streets were sometimes defined either by the backs of buildings which formed a continuous high wall, as in the case of the Barghouthi quarter, or by low rubble stone walls separating the semi-private courtyards from public streets. However, the majority of

paths were mostly defined by related activities which formed a coherent action pattern. The system of paths expressed the villagers' possibilities of movement. The majority were neither paved nor treated as clearly defined public domains. The net-work of alleys could be seen as a series of boundaries whose main function was to separate and defend. Some alleys acted as edges defining the boundaries of each harah. Narrow alleys separated compounds within the same harah. Others led to significant places such as the main village plaza or out to the surrounding fields (Fig. 4.8). In the Barghouthi quarter, the alleys were seen as male social domains: a woman upon meeting a man averted her face, shielding it with her cloak. In contrast the lower quarter men as well as women were seen sitting in front of their entrance doors chatting and drinking coffee.

By delimiting paths of movements and by decreasing permeability as one approached the dwelling, the inhabitants of each quarter provided the appropriate defenses in order to control unwanted intrusions. The Shu'aibi quarter was a good example where there was, and still is, no alley which allowed through traffic. Only the Shu'aibi members (or their visitors) were allowed in. The social and behavioural patterns discussed above resulted in a minimal curiosity about life in other quarters.



Fig.4.8: Village streets and alleys

Courtyard Houses (Ahwash)

Although each quarter had, and still has, its own character, its own spatial organisation and built-form (which will be discussed at length later), they all consisted of a number of contiguous courtyard houses (ahwash, sing. hosh). Each hosh usually contained the houses (dor) of one patrilineal extended family, which contained blood-related men, usually brothers and cousins, and the descendants of their married sons, forming a sub clan. The house (dar) was a single space containing the domestic unit i.e., a man, his wife, children, and perhaps his mother and one of his married sons, depending on the size of the family and the size of the house. In general, there was a strong relationship between genealogical and spatial closeness; while married brothers lived either in the same house or in two adjacent houses, cousins often occupied nearby courtyards. In addition to these courtyard compounds (ahwash), one found single family houses. These houses were some times the nucleus for the formation of new compounds. Due to the lack of sufficient space, married sons often left their father's compounds for new sites.

Different locations and spaces, such as empty lots, alleys and the back of buildings separated the houses in the different quarters, and formed physical boundaries which separated the harat from one another. The nature of such boundaries i.e., whether strong, weak, vivid, sharp, permeable or non-permeable, obviously depended on the group's needs to maintain its integrity as a social group, and on the group's sense of unity and their sensitivity to outside intrusions. The Barghouthis had a very strong sense of isolation and inwardness which was reflected in their spatial organisation. (Each Barghouthi compound was an inward-looking unit and formed an independent, isolated entity); the fallaheen of the lower quarter had much less defined boundaries. The Shu'aibis, who also had strong exterior boundaries, had less sharp boundaries between the different courtyards. The three Shu'aibi courtyards were interconnected, hence allowing for interaction amongst the members of the same clan. With their houses jammed together in a sprawling pattern, the fallaheen of the lower quarter had the least defined boundaries. The different kinship groups residing there showed the least fear of opening up to

the surrounding social and natural environment.

Finally, by defining areas of activities, by defining the function of each space and its intended users, by grouping the dwellings in a certain way, by having inwardly looking courtyards, each quarter was able to maintain its own spatial character. This is the focus of the next section.

THE BARGHOUTHİ QUARTER

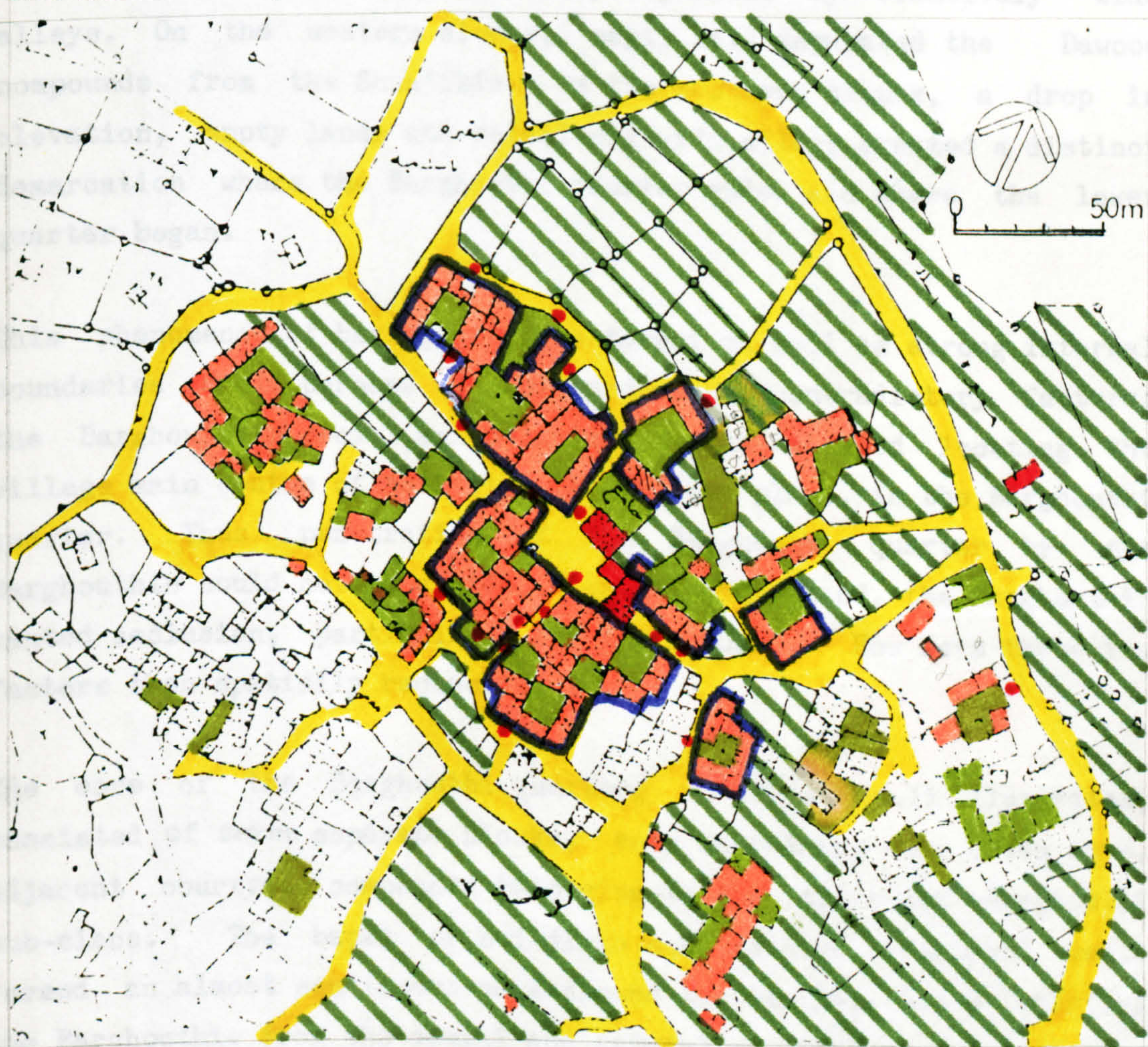


Fig.4.9: The backs of building ■■■■, empty lots ■■■■, and the relatively wide alleys ■■■■, separated the Barghouthi quarter ■■■■ from that of the fallaheen's ■■■■ entry gates

By occupying the top of the hill, the Barghouthi quarter elevated itself above the fallaheen quarters and also "overlooked" them. The

verticality which characterized the Barghouthi buildings added to the visual contrast between the rising Barghouthi buildings and the horizontally expanding fallaheen buildings. The majority of the Barghouthi stone buildings were of two or three floors with domes accentuating the vertical scale which symbolized their power (Fig.4.10). In addition to living in tower-like buildings on top of the hill, the Barghouthis separated themselves from the fallaheen quarters by maintaining clear physical boundaries. As seen in figure 4.9, their quarter was spatially separated by relatively wide alleys. On the western slopes, empty lots separated the Dawood compounds from the Shua'ibis. On the southern slopes, a drop in elevation, empty lands and relatively wide alleys created a distinct demarcation where the Barghouthi quarter ended and where the lower quarter began.

This phenomenon of having strong external as well as strong internal boundaries could perhaps be explained by two contradictory factors; the Barghouthi's social and political status entailed locating the village main centre of activity, the village plaza, in the Barghouthi quarter. Thus penetration of the Barghouthi quarter by non-Barghouthis could not be avoided. On the other hand, the Barghouthis wanted seclusion, particularly for their women. How were these two factors then spatially reconciled ?

The core of the Barghouthi quarter, as figure 4.11 illustrates, consisted of seven separate blocks, each containing one, often more, adjacent courtyard compounds belonging to the different Barghouthi sub-clans. The backs of buildings and the high courtyard walls formed an almost continuous edge around the blocks, hence isolating the Barghouthis from the social and natural environment and offering only a few penetration points. There were no backyards as such in most of the village dwellings. The edges of the block were the exterior walls of the compounds. Each compound was referred to as dar. Dar literally means a house. In this context it referred to a sub-clan composed of a number of extended families, all residing in one compound, or in a number of compounds located in different blocks.



Sheikh Saleh compound



The southern boundary of village plaza

Fig. 4.10: The Barghouthi architecture expressed their power



- The Daher sub-clan: ■ Saleh (1,12,17,18), ■ Atrash (13,16)
■ Seyyad (5), ■ Shak'a (6,7), ■ Rashid (8), ■ Abdul Aziz (11)
■ The 'Ashwah sub-clan sub-clan (3,4)
■ The Can'aan sub-clan (2,10,14)
■ The Abu-Khattab sub-clan (19,20)
■ The Husein sub-clan (21) ■ The Dawod sub-clan (15)
✱ Entry points penetrating high compounds walls

Fig. 4.11: The Barghouthi quarter consisted of a number of well defined blocks.

The northwestern block contained the village sheikh's compound (the Saleh compound) indicated in red, the adjacent Cana'an compound (purple), and the main 'Ashwah compound (yellow). The southern block, the biggest, contained nine adjacent and overlapping compounds. The northern edge of this block defined the northern boundary of the plaza while the southern edge defined the boundary of the quarter. The entry gates of the different compounds penetrated the edge of the block. This block included the 'Ashwah compound, next to it the Seyyad compound, the Dawood compound, the Shaka'a, the Rashid, the Cana'an, the Abdul Aziz, the Daher and the Atrash compound. The eastern block, which was separated from the southern block by the Misshel houses and a narrow alley, consisted of the Cana'an main compound. The northeastern block included the Qasim el-Atrash and Saleh el-'Ali compounds. Finally the northern compound included the Rashid compound. It is noteworthy to mention that the same sub-clan compounds were not located in the same block; this was the case with the 'Ashwah and the Cana'an compounds. The compounds were interlocking both horizontally and vertically. In other words, the ground floor room may have belonged to one family while the upper room belonged to another family. However, the entrances to these rooms were always separate.

The relationship between the location of the different Barghouthi compounds and the village plaza reflected the social significance of the different Barghouthi sub-clans. This was similar to the relationship between the village centre and the different living quarters described earlier (Fig. 4.7). While the compounds of the influential Daher sub-clan surrounded the village plaza, the Abu Khattab and the Husein compounds were located farthest from the plaza. The Abu Khattab compounds neighboured on the fallaheen quarters hence reflecting their position within the Barghouthis' hierarchical order.

The edges of these blocks also defined the entrance to the heart of the quarter, which was also the heart of the village, the communal plaza. The high perimeter walls of the blocks also defined the enclosed space of this plaza. The single most important feature of this harah was the restricted access leading into it. By having

definite and relatively few paths leading into the harah, the Barghouthis were able to control undesirable intrusion. This meant by definition that those few points where access was possible came to have special importance. These points represented either the main accesses leading to the harah or the highly elaborate gateways leading to the dwelling compounds. As figure 4.12 shows, penetration points into the centre of the harah were defined by these blocks. The lack of windows on the first floors and the few windows, which were screened by lattice work on the second floor, revealed very little about the life that thrived behind.

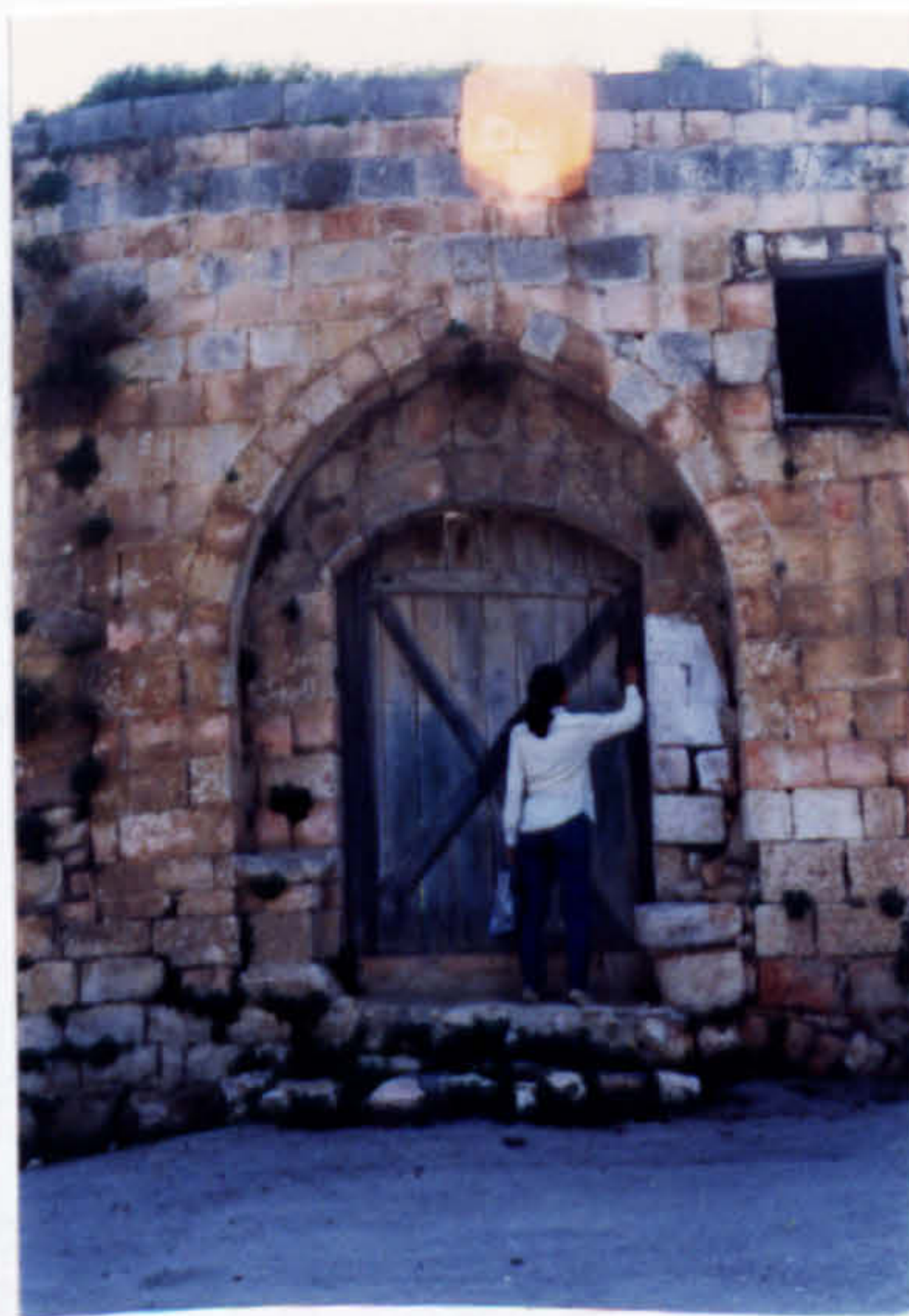
To penetrate to the core of the harah which was also the village centre, one had to pass through either one of the three access points. The east access was considered the formal gateway to the harah and was used by formal visitors and those living on the north and east sides of the village. This entrance acted as a transitional area defining what was in and what was out. To get to the saha, one passed through a narrow and shaded vestibule. The architectural articulation gave a strong sense of arrival. The change in light, width, height, of ceiling and the framed view, all announced the transition from being outside into being contained inside. The other access point located to the west, was much less defined. This access was used by the inhabitants living on the western parts of the village. This access point was a very narrow alley contained by two high walls of the north western block and the southern block on both sides. This gave a feeling of containment contrasting with the feeling of openness given by the saha. The north access point was also a narrow alley contained between the high eastern walls of the Saleh compound and the western walls of the mosque.



Fig. 4.12: Access point leading to the Barghouthi quarter

The continuous edge of each block was penetrated on the ground level by entry gates leading to the courtyards of the compounds. Figure 4.13 shows a number of gates which lead to the Barhgouthi dwellings. The highly ornate and majestic gates not only expressed the status of the Barghouthis, but also designated an important transitional point from the outside communal world to the private world behind. In most cases, there was only one entry way to each compound. However the three compounds which constituted the northwestern block had in addition to their main entry gates, back doors located on the north side (Fig. 4.14). These doors were used mostly by women to avoid being seen by men gathering in the village saha.

Altogether, the lofty location, the verticality, the empty lots of land, the alleys, the backs of buildings, the hardly penetrated walls, the controlled access to the harah and to the individual compounds, and the control of through traffic, created a private world which was to a great extent isolated from the rest of the village.



The Rashid Compound



The Atrash Compound

Fig. 4.13: Entrance gates to some Barghouthi compounds



Saleh Compound



Cana'an



'Ashweh

Fig. 4.14: Back doors used by the women of the Saleh (1) Cana'an (2) and the 'Ashweh (3) compounds

THE BARGHOUTHI DWELLINGS

The one striking feature about the Barghouthi dwellings was their urban-influenced architectural forms. In fact "Barghouthi Architecture", like most throne village architecture, had more in common with urban forms than with what we may term here as the "fallaheen built forms". As explained earlier, the Barghouthis, who were semi-feudalists in a rural setting, had strong ties with urban notables, particularly with those of the town of Nablus. As a result of this, they aspired to lead an urban life style which was reflected in the spatial organisation of their dwellings. The sharp distinction between private and public, which characterized most of the Barghouthi dwellings, was mostly the result of the semi-urban role of their women, a role confining them to the house.

It is believed that most of the Barghouthi buildings were constructed by master-builders who came from Nablus. Hence similarity to urban forms is only to be expected. Master builders usually came with their team and thus transferred the same building techniques and forms that prevailed in the town of Nablus to other locations.

The Barghouthi architecture (and throne village architecture in general), like the social and political role of the Barghouthis, bridged the differences between urban and fallaheen built forms. This is best illustrated in the spectrum of Barghouthi dwellings which lay between the urban looking compounds of the Saleh family, and the peasant forms of some of the Dawood families (Fig. 4.15).

The Barghouthi dwellings, as figure 4.15 illustrates, seem to have had indefinite variety in their architectural forms: size, scale, architectural articulation, treatment of elevations, details of doors and windows etc., all depending on the owner's position in the social hierarchy. Within this seemingly limitless variety, one can delineate invariant features of spatial organisation. For example, the relationship of the single-room houses (dor) to the central courtyard seems to have been an invariant relationship (Fig. 4.16).

Together, uniformity and variety within the Barghouthi dwellings



The Barghouthi Quarter: a general view



The Atrash Compounds



One of the Dawood houses



One of the Saleh compounds



Another Saleh compound

Fig. 4.15: The Barghouthi houses had an infinite variety in their architectural forms

constituted a common pattern for the Barghouthi dwellings. Privacy, separation between women's domestic and men's outer world, (dictated by the absence of the Barghouthi women from the fields and their confinement to their houses), separation between the different domestic households sharing the same courtyard, and to lesser extent, defence were the underlying shared principles dictating the spatial organisation of the majority of the Barghouthi dwellings.

In most of the Barghouthi compounds, one could distinguish four different domains: (1) the male guest area which was considered the men's semi-public domain (only found in the richer Barghouthi families, Saleh and Abdul Aziz), (2) the central courtyard, considered the semi-private domain for all the women of the compound, (3) the single-space houses (dur) around the courtyard, considered the private domains for the domestic household and, (4) the elevated rooms ('alali) located on the upper levels, considered as the very private parental domain.

Before proceeding to a more detailed description of the Saleh and Abdul Aziz compounds, we may pause to list the invariant features which constituted the Barghouthi dwelling pattern:

1. The compound in the majority of cases gathered around a central courtyard (hosh) which was the real heart of the compound. No rule can be given for the dimensions or shape of the courtyard, even though in most cases it was close to being a rectangle. The floor of the courtyard was often, in richer houses, stone paved. No planting as such was found in the courtyard except for one fig or mulberry tree. One or more water wells were often found in the courtyard.
2. Around the courtyard, on three, sometimes four sides, gathered a number of cross-vaulted single spaces. These houses (dur) normally housed the different domestic units of the extended family sharing the compound. A stall riwaq (loggia) for animals, mostly horses, was found in richer Barghouthi houses.
3. The backs of these houses formed an envelope which protected the

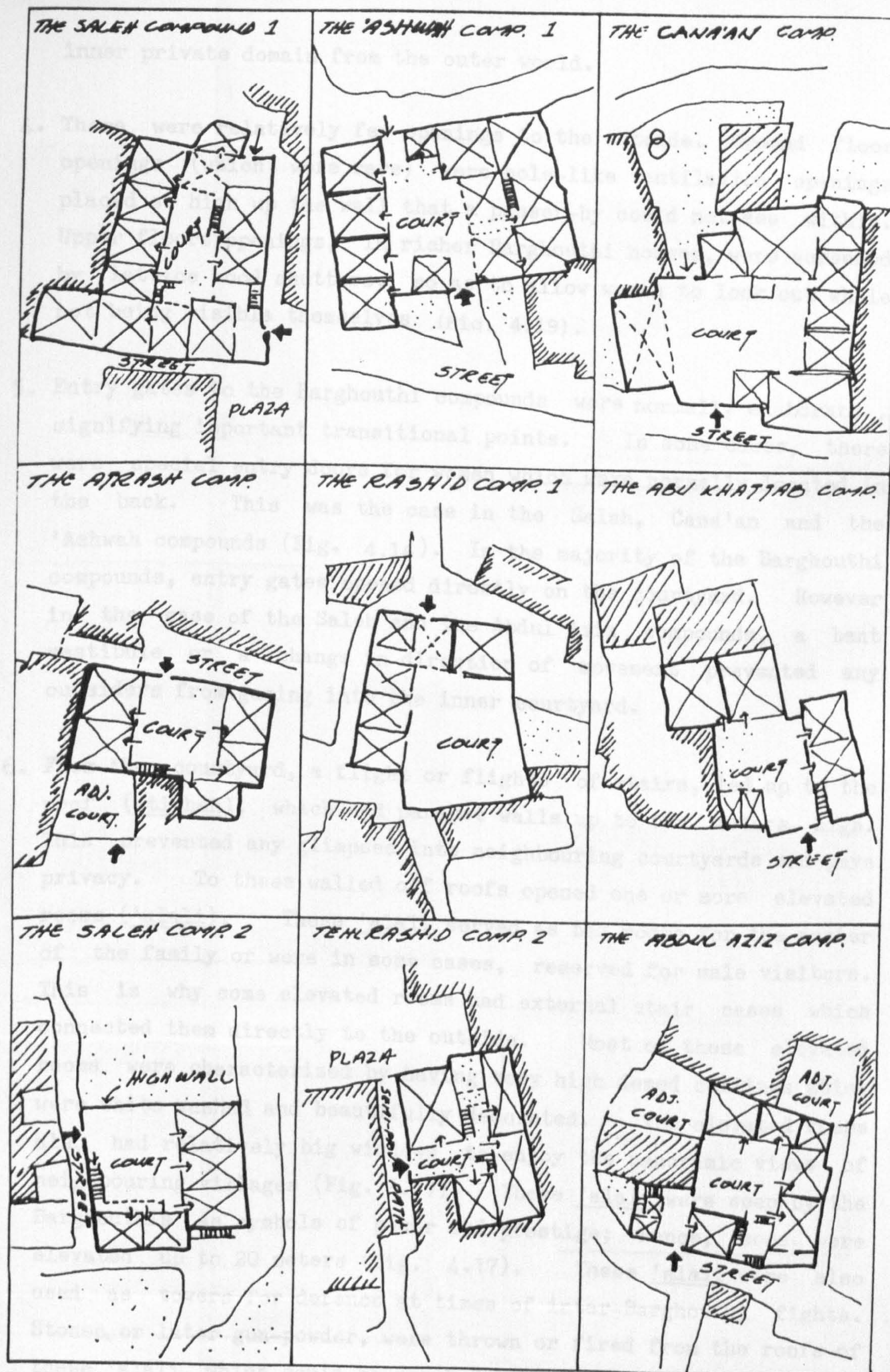


Fig.4.16: Plans of a number of Barghouthi compounds (notice the invariant features: strong external boundaries, weak internal boundaries, defined entrances, central courtyard)

inner private domain from the outer world.

4. There were relatively few openings to the outside. Ground floor openings (which were rare) were hole-like ventilation openings placed so high up the wall that a passer-by could not see within. Upper floors openings, in richer Barghouthi houses, were screened by lattice wood shutters, so as to allow women to look out while not being visible themselves (Fig. 4.19).
5. Entry gates to the Barghouthi compounds were normally elaborate, signifying important transitional points. In some cases, there were special entry doors for women which were normally located in the back. This was the case in the Saleh, Cana'an and the 'Ashwah compounds (Fig. 4.14). In the majority of the Barghouthi compounds, entry gates opened directly on the courtyard. However in the case of the Saleh and the Abdul Aziz compounds, a bent vestibule or a change in direction of movement prevented any outsiders from gazing into the inner courtyard.
6. From the courtyard, a flight or flights of stairs, led up to the roof (stiehah), which had parapet walls up to two meters high. This prevented any glimpses into neighbouring courtyards and gave privacy. To these walled off roofs opened one or more elevated rooms ('alali). These 'alali served as bed rooms for the master of the family or were in some cases, reserved for male visitors. This is why some elevated rooms had external stair cases which connected them directly to the outside. Most of these elevated rooms were characterized by having very high domed ceilings which were white washed and beautifully decorated. The elevated rooms also had relatively big windows to enjoy the panoramic views of neighbouring villages (Fig. 4.17). These 'alali were seen by the Barghouthis as symbols of power and prestige; hence, some were elevated up to 20 meters (fig. 4.17). These 'alali were also used as towers for defence at times of inter-Barghouthi fights. Stones, or later gun-powder, were thrown or fired from the roofs of these 'alali, which could be reached by internal stair cases built within the walls of the elevated room.



Saleh Compound



General view



Cana'an



Rashid and Shak'a



Relatively big windows

Fig. 4.17: The Barghouthi elevated rooms ('alali)

The above were common features to most Barghouthi houses. Below a more detailed description of the social aspects of space will be given of both the Saleh and the Abdul Aziz compounds.

THE SALEH COMPOUND

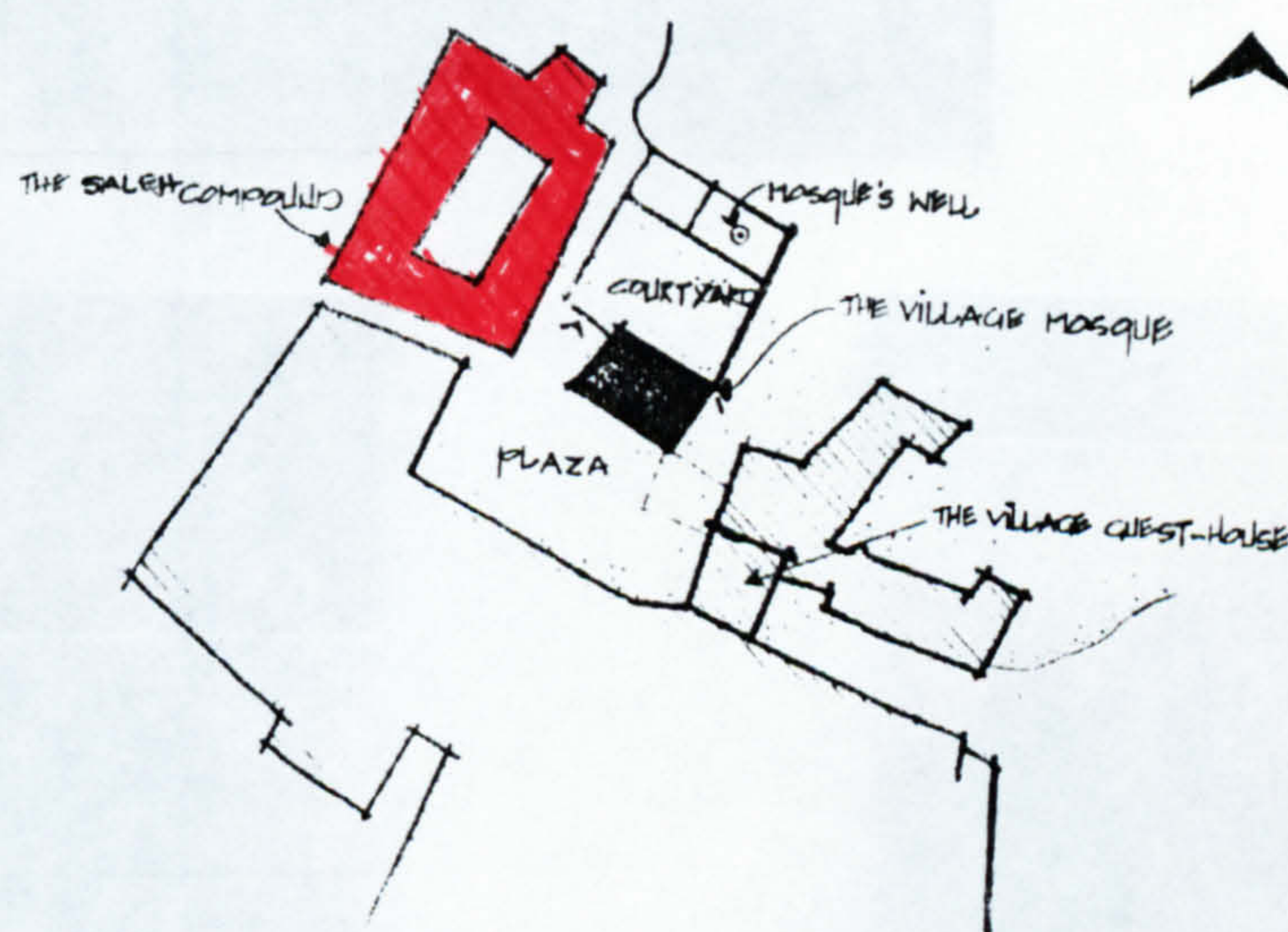


Fig. 4.18: The location of the Saleh compound

The Saleh compound shown in figure 4.18 constituted the northwestern corner of the communal plaza. This compound belonged to the village sheik Saleh Abdul Jaber (1860- 1905), and later to his son, sheik Mahmoud, and his brothers. The stone inscriptions located on the entrance gate and the inner gate show that the compound was built in two stages. The ground floor and part of the second floor were built in 1011 hijri, (1591 AD), while the other part of the second floor was built by sheikh Jaber in 1279 hijri, (1871 AD). This compound (Fig. 4.2) like other Barghouthi compounds was strongly influenced by urban architecture. The majestic scale, the ornate fine stone work and the introverted spatial organisation recalled urban structures. This architecture strongly contrasted with the simpler fallaheen architecture, which was less formal and rather extroverted, especially in its relationship with the outside space and the surrounding environment.

In short, as figure 4.20 shows, the Saleh compound is an introverted two-story building, rectangular in plan (measuring about 23x34m) and



Lattice wood windows



Entrance gate



Stairs to elevated rooms



Southern loggia

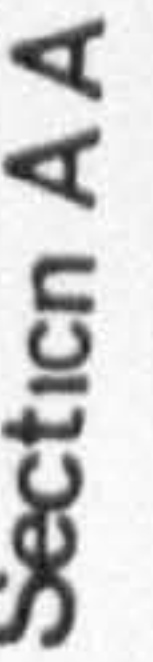
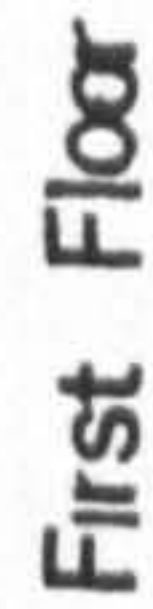


high walled roofs (staiha)

Fig. 4.19: Facets of the Saleh compound



1. Men's semi-public domain
2. Women's semi-private domain.
3. Domestic unit: private domain
4. The parents' private domain



gathered around a central courtyard (hosh), which is open to the sky. The compound has one formal entrance from the plaza and another small women's entrance located on its northern elevation.

As illustrated by figure 4.20 the compound could be divided into four domains:

1. Men's semi-public domain
2. Women's semi-private domain.
3. Domestic unit: private domain
4. The parents' private domain for sleeping.

The men's domain, which was a semi-public area, was used by the men of the compound and their male visitors. This area included (1) the area right outside the compound entrance where men casually met; (2) the entrance vestibule, furnished with a stone seat along its walls and acting as a transitional area between the outer communal space and the inner private world; (3) The Diwan located opposite the entrance where coffee was prepared, and; (4) the visitors' quarter located on the second floor. This floor could be reached by a stair case situated in the east wall of the vestibule. This quarter consisted of a big reception hall where the family's male visitors were received and lodged at night. This was the only room in the whole compound which had decorations on its walls. As figure 4.19 shows, a colonnade was painted on its four walls giving a feeling of being out in nature. In addition to this reception hall, the visitors section had a semi-open space (liwan) which was used as a dining room. This area also had a separate kitchen, and a separate toilet.

This semi-public area was separated from the second semi-private women's domain first, by its location just on the boundary of the compound hence preventing any other interaction with other private domains and second, by using a bent vestibule (L-shape), which changed the direction of the movement and third, by locating the visitors quarter on a separate level and using wood screens on the few windows opening on the inner-court. Finally, the area was separated by having a big gate which set the two worlds apart.

Behind this second gate lay the private domain of the compound's females. The courtyard (el hosh) was the main constituent of the compound with the various single-space houses gathered around. This was the focus of all female domestic activities and the centre of their being. Privacy (and to a lesser extent security), which was highly valued, acted as a crucial factor which influenced the seclusion of the courtyard. The backs of rooms on both the ground and first floors fenced off this private domain from the communal space laying outside its walls. The lack of windows located on the first floor and the screening of windows located on the second floor (shown in figure 4.19) expressed what the place wanted to be in relation to its surroundings. The use of bent entrances and vestibules mentioned above and the back location and scale of the women's entrance also reflected a need for privacy and seclusion. The high walls of the roofs also blocked any glimpses into this private domain. Cana'an writes;

"In Deir Ghassneh no tree may be planted in the courtyard if the doings of the neighbour can be observed from such a tree. No new window may be opened in a house if it overlooks neighbours. If such windows already exist, no male may look through it. The rigid customs of the Orient forbids a man to stand on the roof of his house if it observes the home of his neighbours" (1933: 53).

The compound was the co-residential unit for the Saleh extended family groups based on agnatic kinship. Up until 1905, the compound contained sheikh Saleh, his wife, his five married sons and their descendants. The sheikh's two daughters, Salha and Hakimeh, left the compound upon their marriage. Once the sheikh died, each one of his five married sons formed their own separate domestic unit. Each domestic unit was usually composed of the head of the family, his wife (wives), his unmarried daughters and sons, and the family(ies) of his married sons. The single unit houses(dour) located around the courtyard, housed the domestic units which were the eating group, the shelter group, the hearth group, and also the production group (Lunderstorm, 1982: 130).

The head of the family had the dominant position; he had total control over the resources and labour of his sons. The sons depended

on their father until his death. The oldest woman also had the dominant position in the domestic unit. Her age and the position of her husband decided her position. It is under her supervision that her daughters and daughters-in-law performed their domestic work.

Patterns of marriages within the Saleh family show that most of marriages happened either within the compound or across the neighbouring compounds of the Daher families. Kinship relations were seen as a means of the reproduction of property and the reproduction of human labour. Marriages between first cousins were means of solidifying the extended family relations.

Hence the courtyard was the extended family's shared space. It united the domestic units of the five married brothers. The courtyard consisted of a central area open to the sky; to it were attached four semi-open loggia (riwaqs). The two riwaqs located next to the entrance transitional area, were used as stables. The other two riwaqs located at the other end were back areas used for storage and for domestic functions. The courtyard was neither a homogeneous space nor was it treated as an undifferentiated space. The parts of the courtyard located in front of the single-unit around the courtyard houses were considered as an extension of the house interior. Women of each house considered this yard space as their own, and undertook most of their work in this space. No physical boundaries separated these yard spaces from the neutral space left in the middle which, was used by women and children for circulation and relaxation.

Division of labour along gender lines was quite distinct in the case of the Saleh family (and in most of the wealthier Barghouthi families). The majority of Barghouthi women were restricted in their movements. Their work centered around their domestic activities. The Barghouthi women, again unlike the fallaheen women, never took part in any agricultural work performed by their men outside in the fields. Until their marriages, the Barghouthi girls were looked after by their fathers. On marriage the woman would leave her natal enclosure to join her affinal household. After her marriage she was not allowed to leave the house, not even to visit her family, until the birth of her first child, then she, accompanied by a mahram

(father, brother, or husband), could visit her family. The expression takhzin (to store) was used to express restrictions imposed against her movements. The women were guarded against moving around in the village for no good reason. Upon leaving the high walls surrounding her domain to visit a sick relative, attend a wedding or circumcision celebration, the woman covered her body with a thick black cloak ('abaieh). As mentioned earlier, a woman on meeting a man averted her face and shielded it with the cloak. The man also often turned his back and faced a wall or sat on his knees allowing the woman to pass. Unlike the majority of the fallaheen women whose work did not confine them to the boundaries of their courtyards, the Barghouthi women were the prisoners of their homes.

Within their total seclusion, women organised their domestic work. Not all women in the same household had the same work or load. Social status, prestige, wealth and age influenced the type of work done by each woman. For example, being the wife of the sheikh, sheikh Mahmoud's wife enjoyed a special position and hence had almost no share in the housework. Unlike most other households, the Saleh family had female servants who took care of most of the domestic work. However age in general was the main criterion for the division of work between the women of the same household. Daughters in-law carried the burden of bringing up the children and most of the domestic work (Moore, 1985). Unmarried daughters also helped. They were generally the ones who had relatively more freedom to move about and hence, they were usually the ones who went to bake the bread in the taboon (oven), located outside the compound. The unmarried daughters were also the ones who occasionally carried the water from the village main spring to the house. This was only at times when the four cisterns located inside the compound were empty (which was very rare).

In the yard space in front of each house, most of the domestic work was carried out. This was the space where women cooked, washed clothes and dishes, cured olives, prepared yogurt and cheese, and dried the food. In front of the house was found all sort of cooking utensils, and small piles of wood for the fire. Most domestic work was done in the morning. In the afternoon women had more free time

to enjoy; they often sat with women of the next households, drank coffee and relaxed.

Single Family Houses

Beyond each open-yard was the private domain of each house hold. As figure 4.20 illustrates, sheikh Mahmoud and his descendants, each had two or three single square spaces (beyout, single beit) on the ground floor, and one private bed-room ('allieh) located on the first floor, and is used by the sheikh and his wife only. Each one of the four brothers had one house (beit) on the ground floor and one bed room on the first floor. The single space unit house was considered the private domain separating the different households sharing the same central courtyard. These units were not directly connected to one another, hence expressing the independence of each domestic unit. The thick stone wall with ventilation whole-like opening (taka or hilal), acted as a strong boundary defining the territory of the domestic unit. There was also no direct connection between the beit and the street. A solid wooden door connected the beit to the courtyard which mediated between this private family domain and the outside public area. The mediation of the hosh between the two areas symbolized the family's mediation between the individual and the village as a whole. During daytime, the doors, were kept open, allowing for the interaction between the interiors of the houses and their outer open-yard spaces. At night, the houses' doors were shut permitting closer interaction between members of the same domestic household. Hence, functionally and symbolically, the door expressed the nature of relationship between the five domestic units. Cana'an writes:

Doors play a part in the life of the Palestinians. They enjoy a peculiar sanctity and importance, and the difference between the inside and the outside is that of different worlds. If a guest speaks to a fallah, while he is outside the threshold, he is invited to the house, the kingdom of the peasant. To refuse to enter except for some serious reason, is to refuse hospitality and friendship (1933: 69).

Both the threshold ('atabeh) and the door keystone (shashieh)

embodied high symbolic meanings in the Palestinian folklore (Cana'an, 1932: 70). It was (and still is) believed that the threshold was the favourite abode of the djinn, hence the fallah would put a silver coin under it so as to passify the evil spirits (silver is a good omen denoting light). The bride should step over the threshold on her wedding night so as not to become barren (Granqvist, 1931). That was also the reason for making an offering on the threshold. The keystone was believed to protect the house from the evil spirit. The name of Allah, Quranic inscriptions and geometric designs were mostly found on keystones. The house was characterized by the grouping of all living and working functions under one roof and into one space, without any divisions (Fig. 4.21). This reflected and also allowed for very close contacts between the house attendants. Behind the door was a small transitional area called qa' ed-dar. This was used as service space for depositing shoes. Another threshold separated this area from the rest of the house. In front of the entrance door was the service area which is functionally an extension of the outer working space. Here women kept most of their kitchen utensils for cooking and serving food. They also stored other working tools. Unlike most of the fallaheen houses, the Barghouthi's did not have any difference in elevations between the service area (qa' ed-dar), and the living and sleeping area (el-mastabeh). The mastabeh which occupied the rest of the house was considered as a clean area for living, sleeping and eating. During the summer season the dar functioned mostly as a sleeping area since most domestic work and socialisation took place in the open air. On the same wall of the entrance door, was the fire-place (mawqed or udjaq). In winter this was the centre of women's activities. It was used for heating and for cooking during rainy days. The beit had very little furnishings. At night mattresses are rolled out for sleeping on. During the day mattresses are rolled up and stored in a niche in the wall called (kaos) (Fig. 4.21). Along the thick stone walls (80-120 cm) were a number of storage niches used to store water jars (zeer or jarrah), clothes, and few other belongings. Food was normally stored in special bins made out of mud called khawabi (single khabi). The floor of the room was made out of polished lime mixture (maddeh) made out of shid and nhateh. The house had a cross vaulted ceiling typical of most houses in the village.

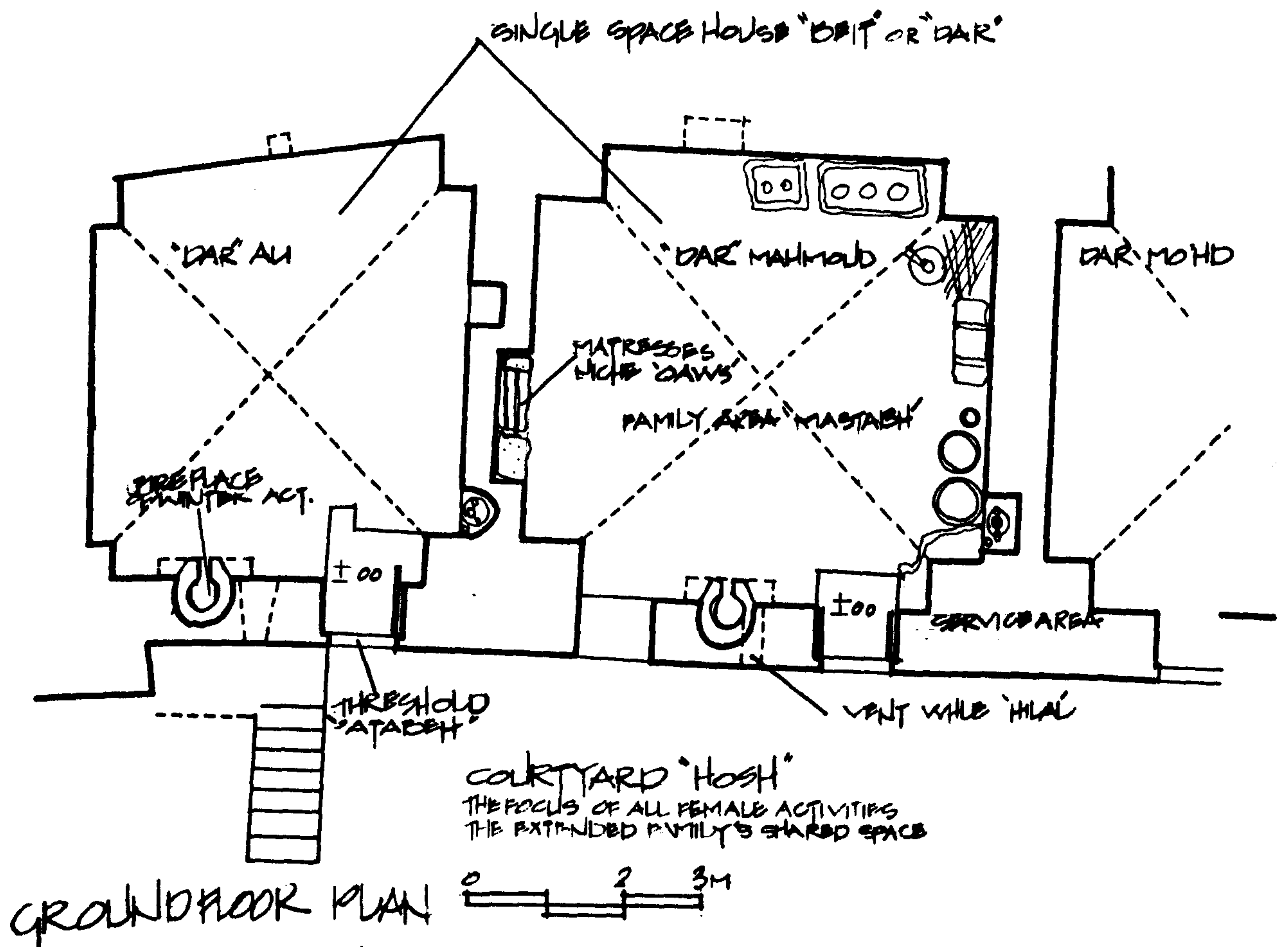


Fig. 4.21: Plan showing the interior layout of two adjacent houses



Floral design on door arch



The diwan window



decorative door of the 'allieh



Decoration on entry door arch

Fig. 4.22: Architectural details from the Saleh compound



women's back entry



the eastern loggia renovated into a living room



bent entry vestibule



door between the liwan and the 'allieh

Fig. 4.23: Architectural details from the Saleh compound

In the summer and during daytime the house was not much in use. Only during festive occasions such as weddings and feasts the house played an active role.

The two staircases, located in the north-eastern and south-western corners of the central courtyard, connected the extended family communal space to the private domains pertaining to the masters of the domestic units. The compound had five elevated rooms ('alali) which functioned as parental sleeping rooms. As figure 4.20 illustrates, each elevated room had a walled-off roof (steiha), which was used as an outdoor terrace by the head of the family and his wife. While sheikh Mahmoud and his brother 'Ali shared one steiha, Mohammad, Yousif, and Abdul Jabar, each had his own steiha. However no walls separated between the three brothers. These walled-off sections of the roof formed an anti-room to the more private parts of the house. The elevated rooms were the most elaborated and decorated parts of the house. The pendentive domes of the 'alali had geometrical intricate designs on the inside. The interior walls were often white washed. The floors were frequently paved with coloured tiles or marble mosaic (Fig. 4.22 and 4.23).

In the walls were recesses for ornamental wood cupboards with delicately carved doors and panelled with delicately carved panels.

Unlike openings on the ground floor which were very small, the 'alali windows were relatively big. As figure 4.19 illustrates ornated shutters, made out of lattic wood, were used. The outside of these windows were also elaborately decorated.

Hence, unlike the fallaheen houses which will be described at length later, the Saleh house was differentiated into different domains varying in their functions and their gradations of privacy and intimacy.

I will now describe another Barghouthi dwelling, the Abdul Aziz to indicate the diversity which existed within this class of habitat.

The Abdul Aziz compound, located on the southern boundaries of the Barghouthi quarter is a closed courtyard house with a square plan, like most other Barghouthi houses.



Fig. 4.24: The location of the Abdul Aziz compound

Although there are no inscriptions or any other material evidence indicating the exact date of construction, the architectural treatment of the facades, particularly that of the entrance and gate, makes us believe that the construction date was close to that of the Saleh compound, i.e., the early Ottoman period in the sixteen century. The descendants of Abdul Aziz occupied two adjacent compounds. The majority lived in the Abdul Aziz compound and the minority lived in two houses located opposite.

An Impermeable Exterior

The Abdul Aziz compound is joined to other Barghouthi buildings from the north and the west. The two-story^e compound was built out of pink and white stone, characteristic of most Barghouthi houses. No



South-east elevation



court from entry vestibule



court from loggia



staircase to 'allieh



Dar Mustafa renovated

Fig. 4.25: Facets of the Abdul Aziz compound

distinction was made between the lower and upper floors, both built from rough squarish stones. The massive and solid exterior walls had very few openings, hence revealing very little about the inside. As seen in figure 4.25, the west and east elevations each had two small squarish windows (20 x 20 cm) called hlalat. In 1966, two relatively big windows were opened in the west elevation, hence changing the character of the once impermeable exterior boundary.

This impermeability was also true of the front facade before the opening of the middle door and the big window in the 1930s. The middle part of this facade was badly damaged in the 1928 earthquake. As a result the middle elevated room ('allieh) was pulled down in 1942, leaving only the slab of a projecting window (kishk). The four corbel stones which carried this window are still projecting from the facade today.

The most elaborate section of this degenerated facade is its entry gate. The projecting frame receiving the gate, the two lines carved around this frame and the smooth ashlar stone used only for this frame, all emphasize the importance of the former single opening.

The architectural articulation of the entry gate (Fig.4.52) also expresses the social significance of the compound. The wooden gate which is made of a single leaf, is set in a niche. The door itself has a beautiful segmental arch made of red and white interlocking voussoirs. The big door contains a smaller auxiliary door. Only important guests were received through the fully opened door. The niche receives a simple pointed arch with two stone seats (maksaleh), typical of most Barghouthi houses.



Fig. 4.52: Entry gate

The Inner Spatial Organization

The darkness of the entry vestibule, and the change in direction of

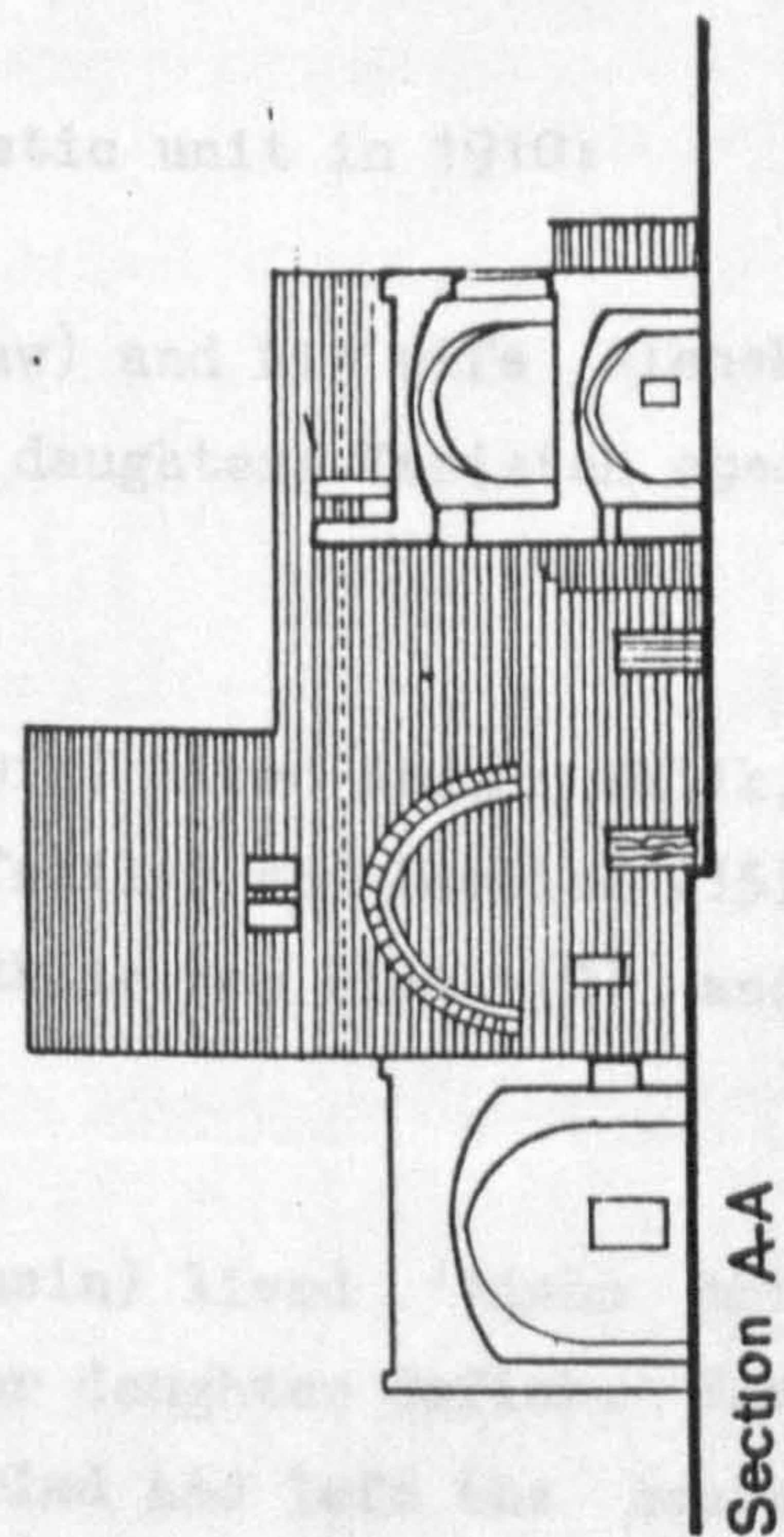
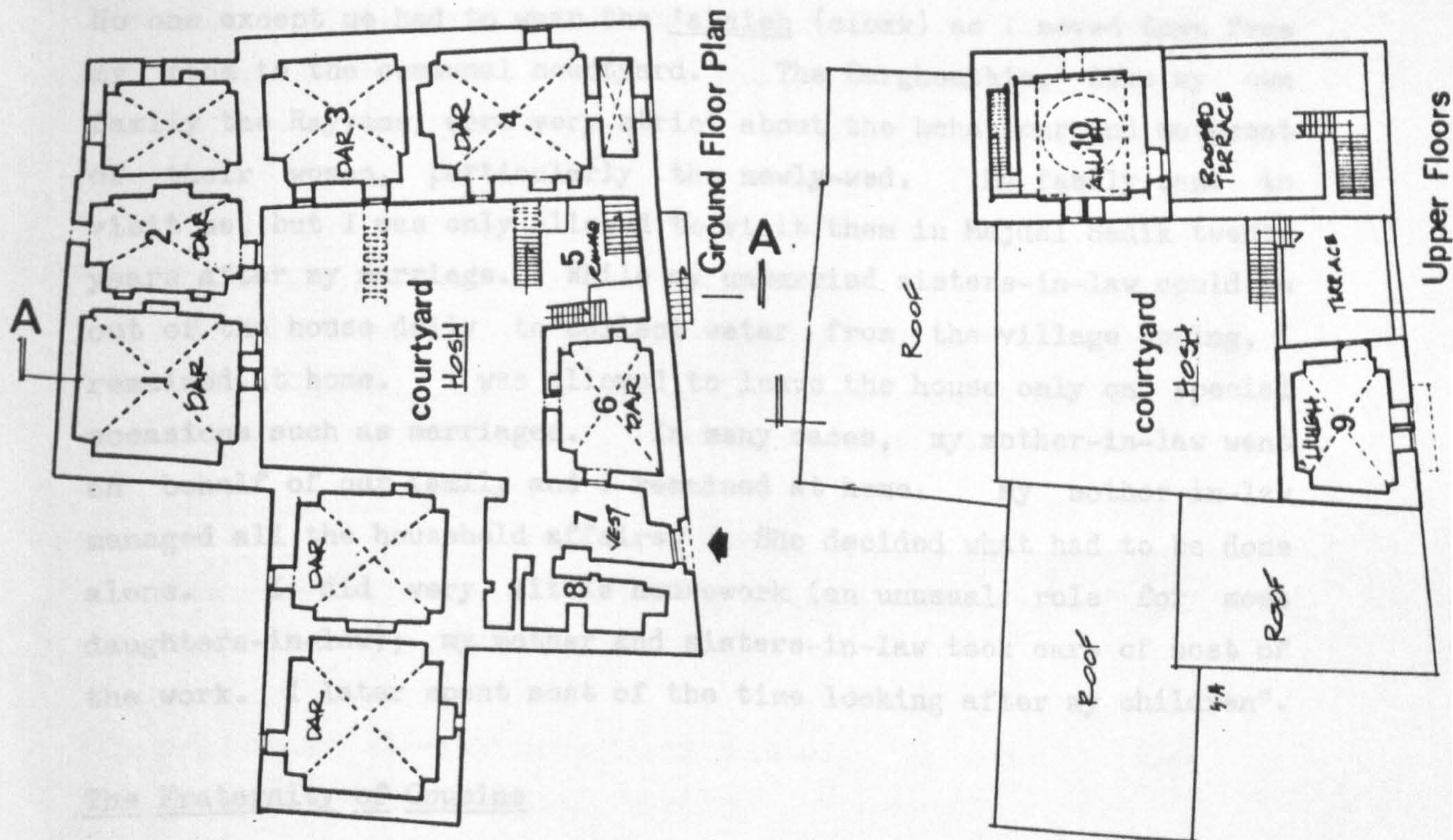
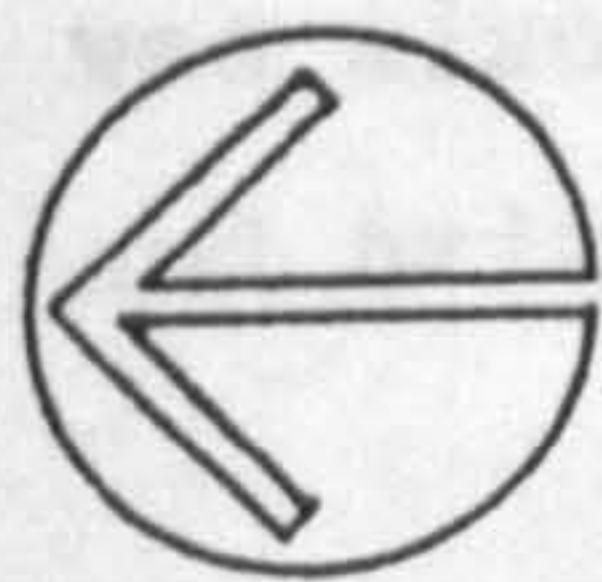
movement announces the transition into a private world. The two-story compound is gathered around a central courtyard. The same principles are present here which dictated the spatial organization of the Saleh compounds, discussed earlier. These are privacy, separation between women's domestic world and men's outer world, the separation between the different domestic households sharing the central courtyard, and defence.

Similar to the Saleh compound, the Abdul Aziz compound was basically divided into four domains which had different functions and different users; 1) the central courtyard common to all, was considered the women's semi-private domain; 2) the individual houses (dur) around the courtyard on the first floor were the private domains of the different households; 3) the elevated rooms located on the upper floors were the private domain used as parental sleeping rooms. However, since the turn of this century, the elevated rooms lost their original functions and housed nuclear families, who used them for both living and sleeping. The semi-public domain, located next to the entrance vestibule, has also lost its intended function since the turn of this century and, like the elevated room, was used as a private house.

A Stranger in a Beehive of Cousins

Zakieh (Um Ezzat), who is about ninety years old today, described to me the patriarchal world of cousins which she joined around the year 1910. Zakieh, who is originally from the village of Majdal Sadik near Jaffa, married Hassan, the son of Mustafa, when she was twelve years old. "I, of course, came to live in the house of my father-in-law Mustafa and his family. My husband and I were given the elevated room which was used by my in-laws as their sleeping room. They moved to live and sleep in the lower room. Since I was a "stranger", my husband prohibited me from talking to any of his brothers or his male cousins who shared the same compound. I once talked to his brother 'Abed and as a punishment my husband stopped talking to me for a week. This was not the case with other women - wives - in the compound since they were all related to one another.

Fig. 4.27
Deir Ghassaneh: The Abdul Aziz Compound
Surveyed 1986
scale 0 5 10m



No one except me had to wear the 'abaieh (cloak) as I moved down from my room to the communal courtyard. The Barghouthis, like my own family the Rayyans, were very strict about the behaviour and movement of their women, particularly the newly-wed. My family came to visit me, but I was only allowed to visit them in Majdal Sadik twenty years after my marriage. While my unmarried sisters-in-law could go out of the house daily to collect water from the village spring, I remained at home. I was allowed to leave the house only on special occasions such as marriages. In many cases, my mother-in-law went on behalf of our family and I remained at home. My mother-in-law managed all the household affairs. She decided what had to be done alone. I did very little housework (an unusual role for most daughters-in-law); my mother and sisters-in-law took care of most of the work. I later spent most of the time looking after my children".

The Fraternity of Cousins

"In 1910, this compound housed the families of my father-in-law Mustafa, and his three sons Hasan (my husband), 'Abed and Sa'id. It also housed the families of my father -in-laws' three cousins; Abed Malik, Mahmoud, and Abdul Rahim. All the wives of these men were their first or second cousins".

Zakieh described who was living in each domestic unit in 1910:

"In Dar el'Abed lived 'Abed (my brother-in-law) and his wife Aisheh (who was also his first cousin) and their two daughters Tariefah aged (14) and Azizeh (10)".

"In Dar 'Abdul Malik (my father in-law's cousin) lived Abdul Malik, his wife Rahmeh (from the Atrash Barghouthi family) and Darwish (15) (Abdul Malik's son from his second wife), their son Rida (2) and Abdul Malik widowed sister 'Aisheh"

"In Dar Mahmoud (also my father in-law's cousin) lived 'Aishe the widow of Mahmoud, her son Mohammad (15) and her daughter Safieh. Her daughters Salwa and Nafiseh were already married and left the house before I came".

"In Dar Mustafa (my in-laws) lived my father-in-law Mustafa, my mother-in-law Zainat (who is the sister of 'Aisheh, the wife of Mahmoud mentioned above) and my sisters-in-law Bakrieh (13), Khadiegeh (11) and Amineh (10)".

"In Dar Sa'id (my brother-in-law) lived Sa'id, his wife Mariam (who was his first cousin), and their daughters 'Aisheh (3) and Latifeh (2). In addition to their lower house, Dar Sa'id had one of the upper elevated rooms which was used as a parental bed room".

"In the upper floors, there were three elevated rooms; in the western elevated room lived Abdul Rahim (my father-in-law's cousin) and his wife Wadha (who was his second cousin)".

"In the eastern elevated room lived 'Aisheh, the widow of 'Awad (my fathers-in-law second cousin), with her grand-daughter (12)".

"And finally, I and my husband Hasan lived in the southern elevated room, which later collapsed (1942). But I used to join my in-laws during the day".

In the central courtyard were two ovens (taboon) located in the northwestern corner, used by all the women of the compound.

The usages and spatial organisation of the different domains in this compound was very similar to those discussed above in the Saleh compound, hence no further elaboration is necessary. It is worth mentioning that the four elevated rooms which belonged to the different nuclear families were reached by four different staircases (Fig.4.27) and were located at different heights to provide for maximum privacy.

I described the Abdul Aziz compound here in some detail to illustrate the significant differentiation in life-style that existed within the elite of the Deir Ghassaneh peasant community. It also typifies the manner in which high status architectural form has been modified to serve the needs of new social arrangements in family life.



Fig.4.28: Geometric designs on the
'allieh door



Fig. 4.29: The Abdul Aziz 'Allieh from courtyard and from walled roof



Fig.4.30: Single family houses gathered around the central courtyard



Fig.4.31: Location of the Shu'aibi quarter

- The Shu'aibi houses
- The quarter's inner communal courtyard
- Olive press located outside the quarter proper
- Arrows indicate the two access points to the quarter
- The quarter's elevated room ('alieh), the only structure in the quarter located on the first floor

Located on the village southeastern slopes, the Shu'aibi quarter which was the second largest "Fallahéen" quarter, housed four out of the five Shu'aibi sub-clans; (Dar Jaber, Dar Salman, Dar esh-Sheikh Saleh and Dar Shahren). The fifth sub-clan, Dar Abu Subuh, lived in the same area but outside the harah proper (Fig. 4.31). The Shu'aibi clan was originally from the neighbouring village of Kefer 'Ein but took refuge in Deir Ghassaneh at least two hundred years ago.

In contrast to the Barghouthi sub-clans, the Shu'aibi sub-clans were the most homogeneous group in the village, with little status differences among them. Relations between the five sub-clans, who believed themselves to be the descendants of Shu'aib, were very strong. This was reflected and enhanced by endogamous marriages as most marriages occurred between cousins. There were very few (one or two) marriages between the Shu'aibis and the other fallahéen of

the lower quarter. Since the Shu'aibis saw themselves as belonging to a "higher" social status than that of the rest of the fallaheen, they restricted their marriages to inter sub-clan marriages. "We did not like to give our women to outsiders" says Abu Rida, a prominent figure in the Shu'aibi clan. "We only gave them to non-Shu'aibis when there were no Shu'aibi men to take them, why give them to outsiders?". There were more marriages between the Shu'aibis and the fallaheen of neighbouring villages, particularly with the villages of Brokin and Kefr 'Ein. As we noted earlier, there were no marriages between the Shu'aibis and the Barghouthis until 1962, when Aziz from the Shu'aibi clan, married a Barghouthi woman from the 'Ashwah sub-clan.

The Shu'aibis formed a cohesive closeknit group and hence were often referred to by other groups in the village as "Druse", a metaphorical reference to the heretical offshoot of Islam known for their social cohesion and secret rituals.

In the next few pages, we examine the way in which this cohesiveness reflected itself in the spatial organisation of the Shua'ibi harah, and how the harah was spatially related to the rest of the village.

Figures 4.31 and 4.32 illustrate how the Shu'aibi quarter was separated from the rest of the village. A narrow alley separated it from the neighbouring Saker and Messhal houses located to its northwest. The Abu Khattab compound, located to the north of the Shu'aibi quarter, was the only adjacent structure sharing common walls with the Shu'aibi's, but it had an entrance outside this harah.

Unlike the Barghouthi quarter, which consisted of a number of distinctively separate compounds (Fig. 4.11), the Shu'aibi quarter consisted only of one large block with clear external boundaries. Again in contrast to the Barghouthi quarter, the Shu'aibi quarter was characterized by rather weak internal boundaries, allowing for easy interaction between the different Shu'aibi sub-clans. As figure 4.32 illustrates, the perimeter wall formed by the backs of the Shu'aibi buildings separated the inner core of their harah from the

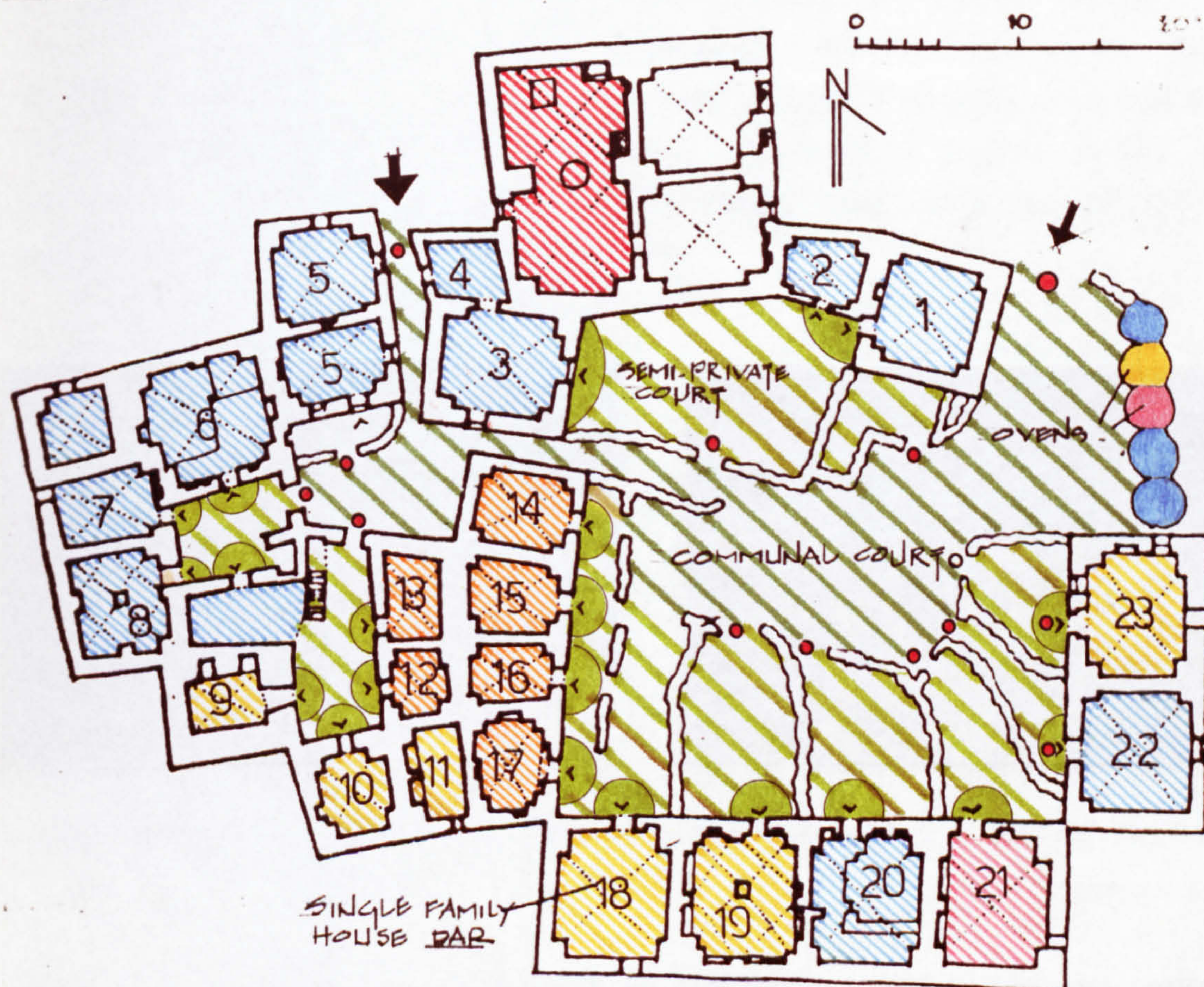


Fig. 4.32: The Shu'aibi quarter

- ↓ Northwestern entrance connecting quarter to the rest of the village
- ↓ Northeastern entrance connecting quarter to fields
- ✓ Entry to individual houses
- Important transitiosal point
- Ovens (tawabin) belonging to the different sub-clans

- | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| ▨ Dar Abu Jaber houses | ▨ Communal courtyard |
| ▨ Dar esh-Sheikh Saleh houses | ▨ Semi-private courtyards |
| ▨ Dar Salman houses | ▨ Semi-private frontyards |
| ▨ Dar Abdul Jawad houses | ▨ The Shu'aibi olive press |
| ▨ Neighbouring Barghouthi houses | |

rest of the village. There were no openings except for the few small ventilation holes. In contrast with the Barghouthi compounds, which had elaborate entry gates penetrating parameter walls, the Shu'aibi's simple entry doors could only be reached from an inner communal courtyard. Spatially, the Shu'aibi quarter was the most well-defined quarter in the village. As seen in figure 4.33, its parameter wall (i.e., backs of buildings) completely fenced off the harah from the east, south and west.



Fig. 4.33: Backs of the Shu'aibi buildigs formed a strong external boundary

The two well-defined entrances to the harah (which had no gates) were located on the northwest and northeast (fig. 4.32). The former was a very narrow alley defined by two relatively high and solid buildings. This entrance, which alternatively connected and separated the Shu'aibi quarter from the rest of the village, symbolized a "cautious" and formal relationship which the Shu'aibi clan had, and still has, with the rest of the village (Fig.4.34).

Outside this entrance lay the olive press (bed) which belonged to the Shu'aibi clan and the Atrash (Barghouthi) sub-clan. In addition to the members of these two clans, the press was also used by the inhabitants living in the southeast section of the village. This olive press, like the rest of the presses (which mostly had a joint ownership), was one of the communal activity centres bringing together members of the different clans. The location of this press outside the harah proper, guarded against any outside - i.e. non Shu'aibi - intrusions into the harah. In addition, it limited the



Fig.4.34: Narrow alleys connected the Shu'aibi quarter with the rest of the village

movements of the Shu'aibi women who went as far as the press door - never entering - to fetch the pressed olives and oil.

While this entry point acted as a connection (and barrier) towards the rest of the village, the northeast entry point to the harah, symbolized the open and free relationship of the fallah towards nature. This entrance was less defined than the former, since it opened up towards the Shu'aibi agricultural fields, located mostly on the eastern slopes. This entrance was defined only by the wall of the buildings located on the west and by a row of five round stone and mud structures used as ovens (tawabin) to the east. The tawabin, which no longer exist, were built with their entrance doors open to the inside to screen off the women from strangers who might be passing by.

The Elevated Room

Unlike the Barghouthis, who had one or more 'allieh for every extended family compound, the whole Shu'aibi quarter had one single 'allieh shared by all male members of the quarter and their male visitors. The 'allieh in this case was used more as the quarter's exclusively male guest-room, rather than the master bedroom as was the case for the Barghouthis.

The Shu'aibi elevated room (Fig 4.35), which was located on the second floor, could be reached by a stair case (no longer there) located right off the northwestern entry, hence avoiding any undesirable intrusion into the core of the quarter. The 'allieh also had a walled roof (steiha) laying in front of it, again fencing the elevated room off from the main courtyard of the quarter.

This elevated room could also be reached by an internal stair case, located inside the Abu Jaber courtyard (Fig. 4.32). This stair case allowed the women of the quarter to reach the elevated room, so as to serve the visitors, without having to go outside their quarter.

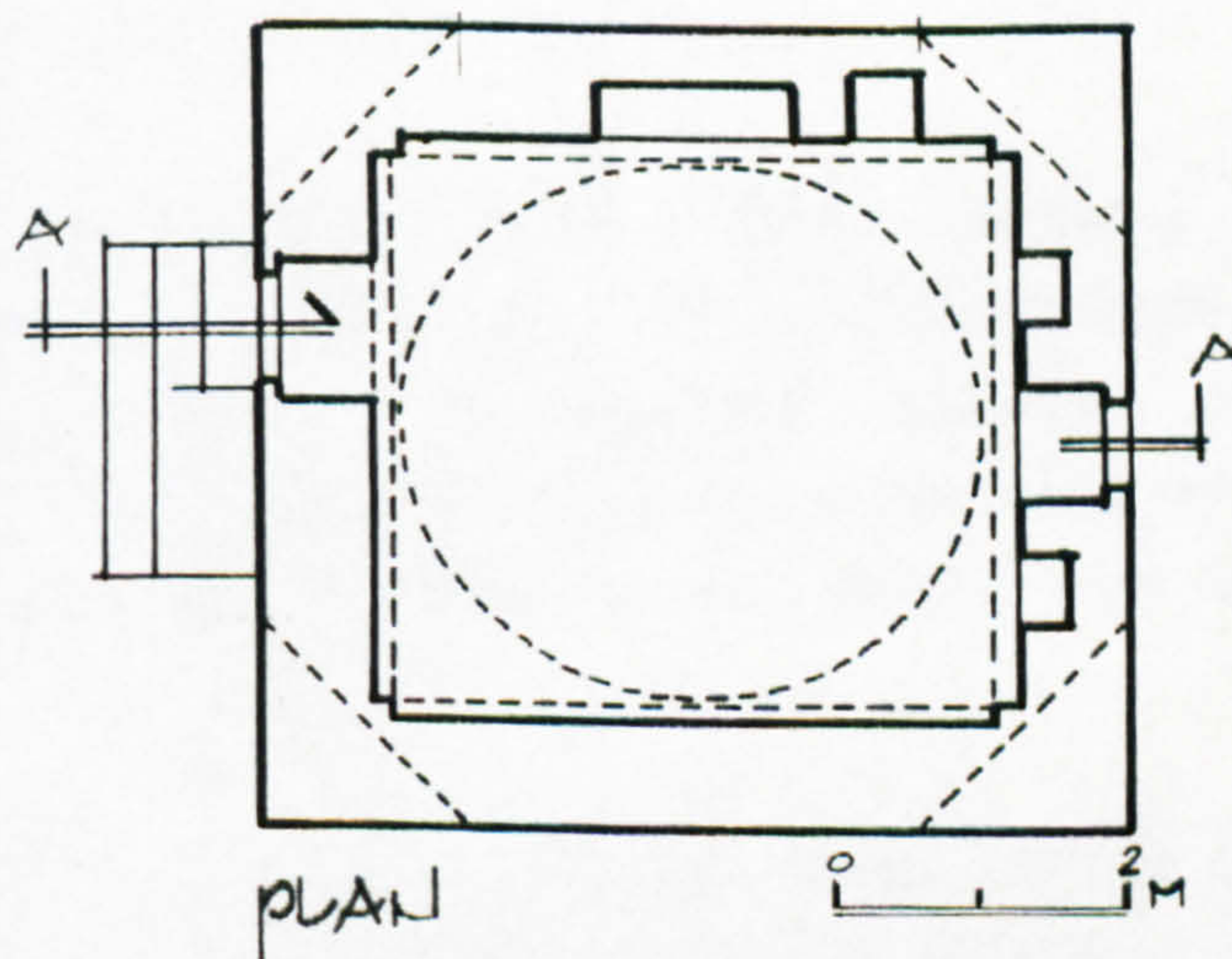
The elevated room as figure 4.35 illustrates, consisted of one square room roofed with a dome as opposed to a cross vault, hence showing



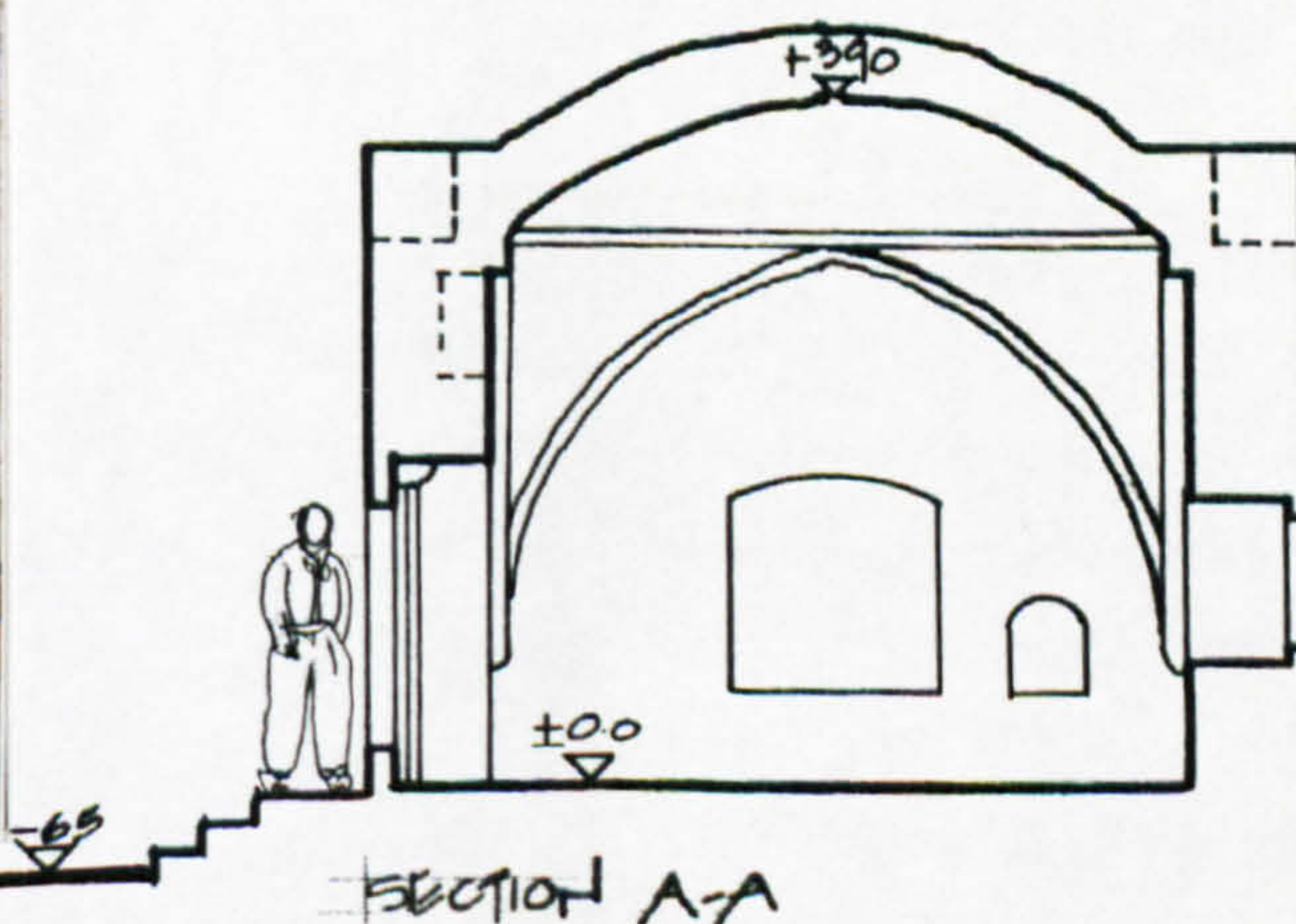
THE SHU'AIBI QUARTER



DOME



PLAN



SECTION A-A

Fig. 4.35 The Shu'aibi Elevated Room ('Allieh)

its significance. The inside of the dome which was whitewashed, had intricate decorations (Fif. 4.35). Similar to other Barghouthi elevated rooms, the Shu'aibis had little furnishings which consisted basically of mattresses and cushions laid on the floor. The 'alieh had one relatively big window looking away from the Shu'aibi quarter.

THE SHU'AIBI COMMUNAL COURTYARD

The Shu'aibi quarter could be seen as one communal compound shared by the different sub-clans. Connected to this courtyard were another two smaller, enclosed semi-private courtyards.

Figure 4.32 illustrates the distribution of the four sub-clans which lived in this quarter around the turn of this century:

The largest sub-clan, dar Abu Jaber (indicated in blue) included the descendants of Abul Hamid and his six sons, who ultimately came to establish separate domestic units. The Abu Jaber sub-clan lived mainly in adjacent houses (dour), located on the north and west of the quarter, but some of them also occupied houses within the main courtyard.

The Salman sub-clan (indicated in yellow) and the Sheikh Saleh sub-clan (orange) who shared a common courtyard, also had houses located within the main courtyard. The smallest sub-clan, Dar Abdel Jawad (pink), had only one house, located within the main courtyard.

The Shu'aibi main courtyard was thus more of a communal clan space, rather than a private sub-clan space, as was the case in the Barghouthi quarter. This can be explained by a number of reasons: first, as a result of the close intermarriage patterns of the Shu'aibi sub-clans, almost all members residing in this quarter were closely related. Second, even though the Shu'aibi women were influenced by the social conservatism of the Barghouthis, the Shu'aibi women, together with most other fallaheen women, took an active role in some agricultural tasks. Hence the interaction between the Shu'aibi men and women was much more substantial.

Third, the fact that none of the village centres of activities (such as the village mosque or guest-house) were located within the Shu'aibi quarter; hence there was no need for non-Shu'aibis to enter this quarter, as was the case in the Barghouthi quarter.

Spaces within this quarter were differentiated into communal circulation areas (service areas), in which all members of the Shu'aibis moved freely, and semi-private areas, located directly outside the individual houses. The former included natural non-paved circulation paths and also the women's baking area, where all the tawabin were located.

Each one of the single room houses located around the courtyard defined its own front yard (kussah). This front yard constituted the houses' semi-private domain.

Depending on the occupants' needs and desire for privacy, the spatial definition of these semi-private domains varied. In some cases, as in the case of houses 14-17, the semi-private space was defined by raising the level of the platform located in front of these houses from that of the main courtyard (fig. 4.36).

In other cases (houses no. 1-4 and 18-23) rubble stone walls (slasel) separated the different adjacent frontyards (fig. 4.36). Both Abu Jabir and Ali Salman (houses no. 5-13) created their own private courtyards by completely enclosing their front yards with rather elaborate entry gates (fig. 4.36).

In whatever way the front yard was defined, it remained the most active part of both the habitat, and the communal hosh. Its many elements included cooking utensils, washing basins, goods, fire wood, water jars and barrels, clothes hung on rubble walls or lines, and eating and drinking vessels for livestock. All indicated the active role this space played, particularly in the lives and activities of women. Cleaning dishes, washing clothes, cooking, cleaning grain, drying produce, making clay utensils and also sitting and talking, were all activities that took place in this semi-private domain. Activities in the front yard lasted throughout the day; hence the



Fig. 4.36 The definition of the semi-private frontyards varied

hosh was one of the most utilized spaces by women. If there was not enough space inside the house, herds of sheep and goats were kept during the night in a special part of the courtyard called the hathereh.

THE SHU'AIBI HOUSES

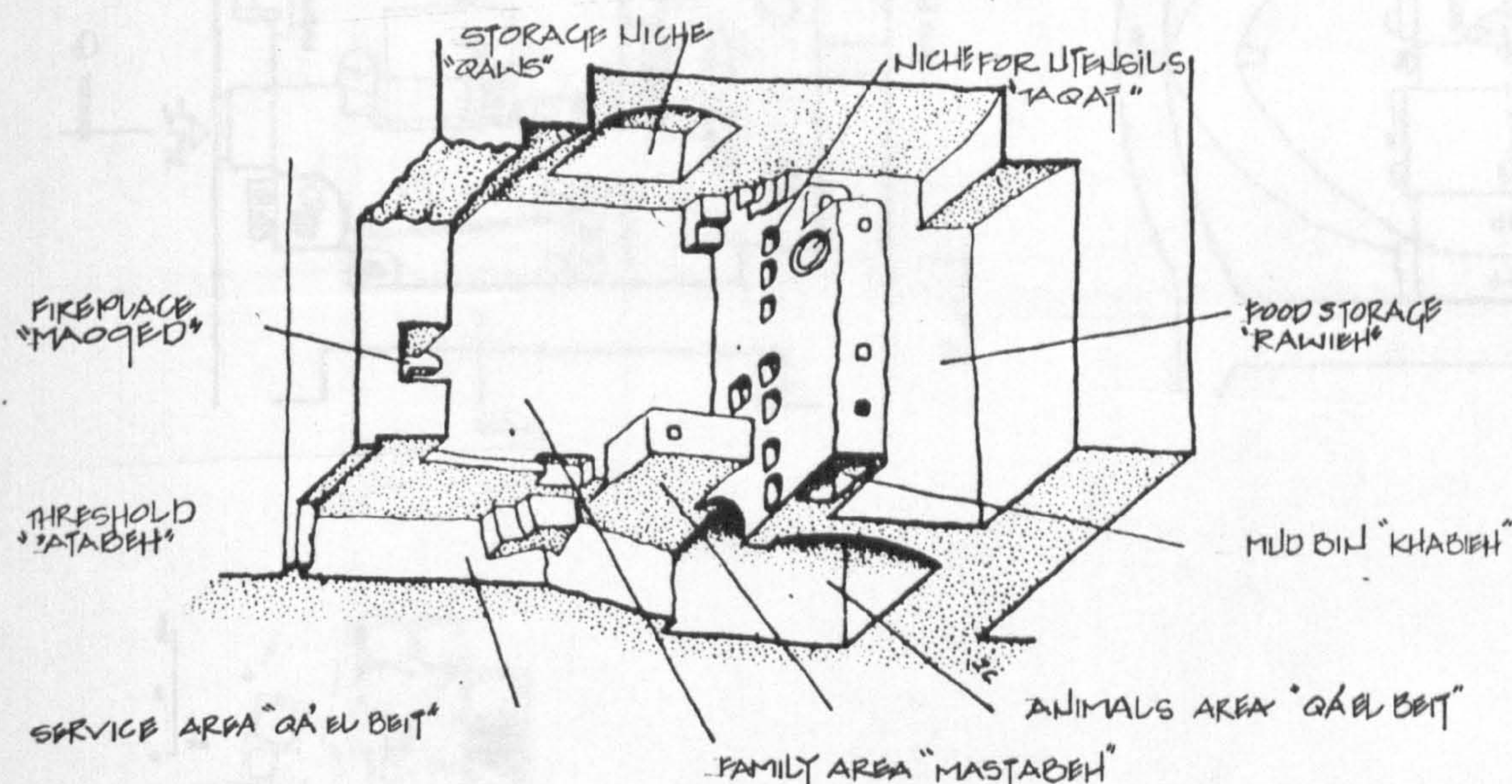


Fig.4.37: Isometric of a typical peasant house
(Drawn by J. Cejka); source: A'amiry and Cejka (n.d.)

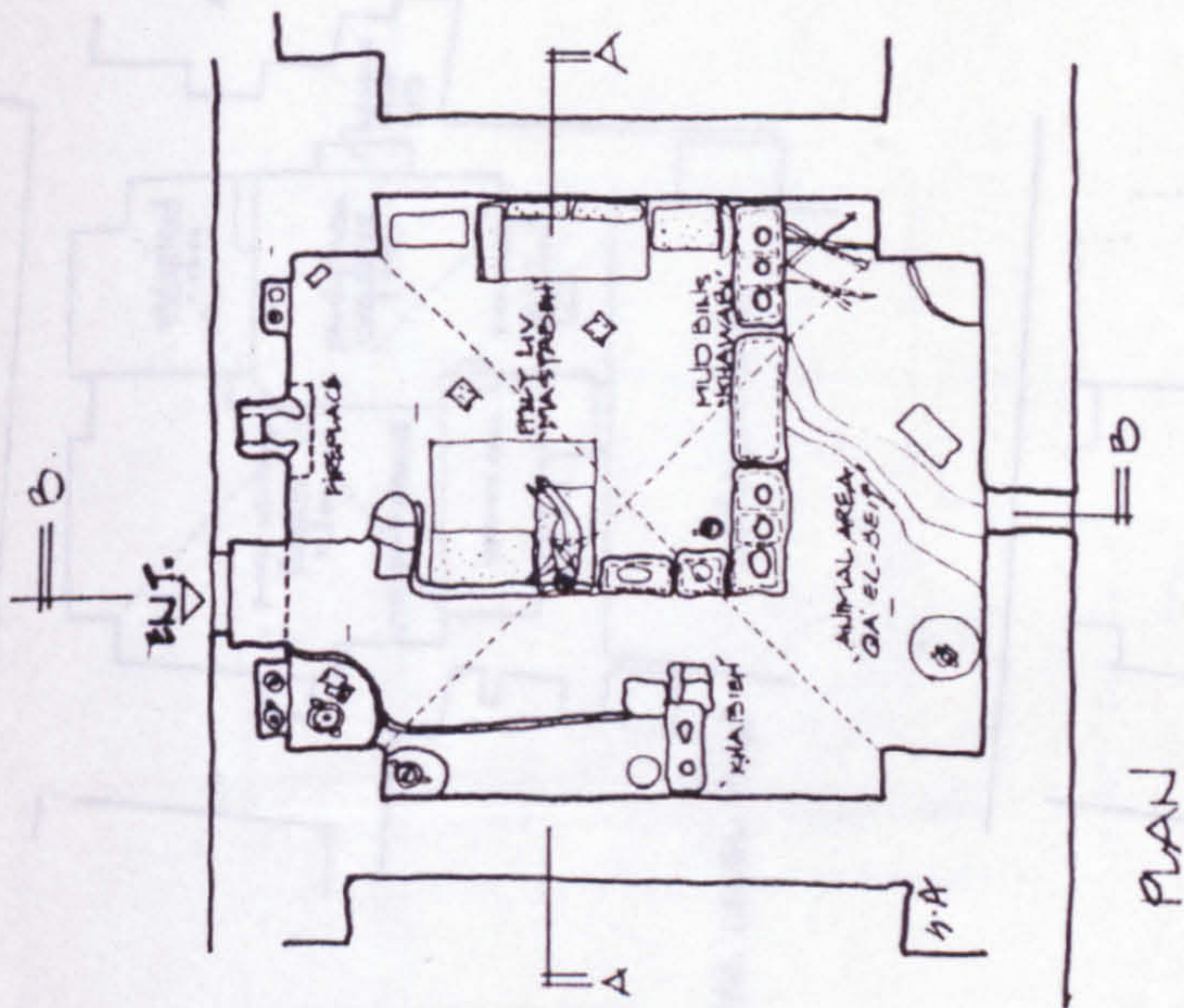
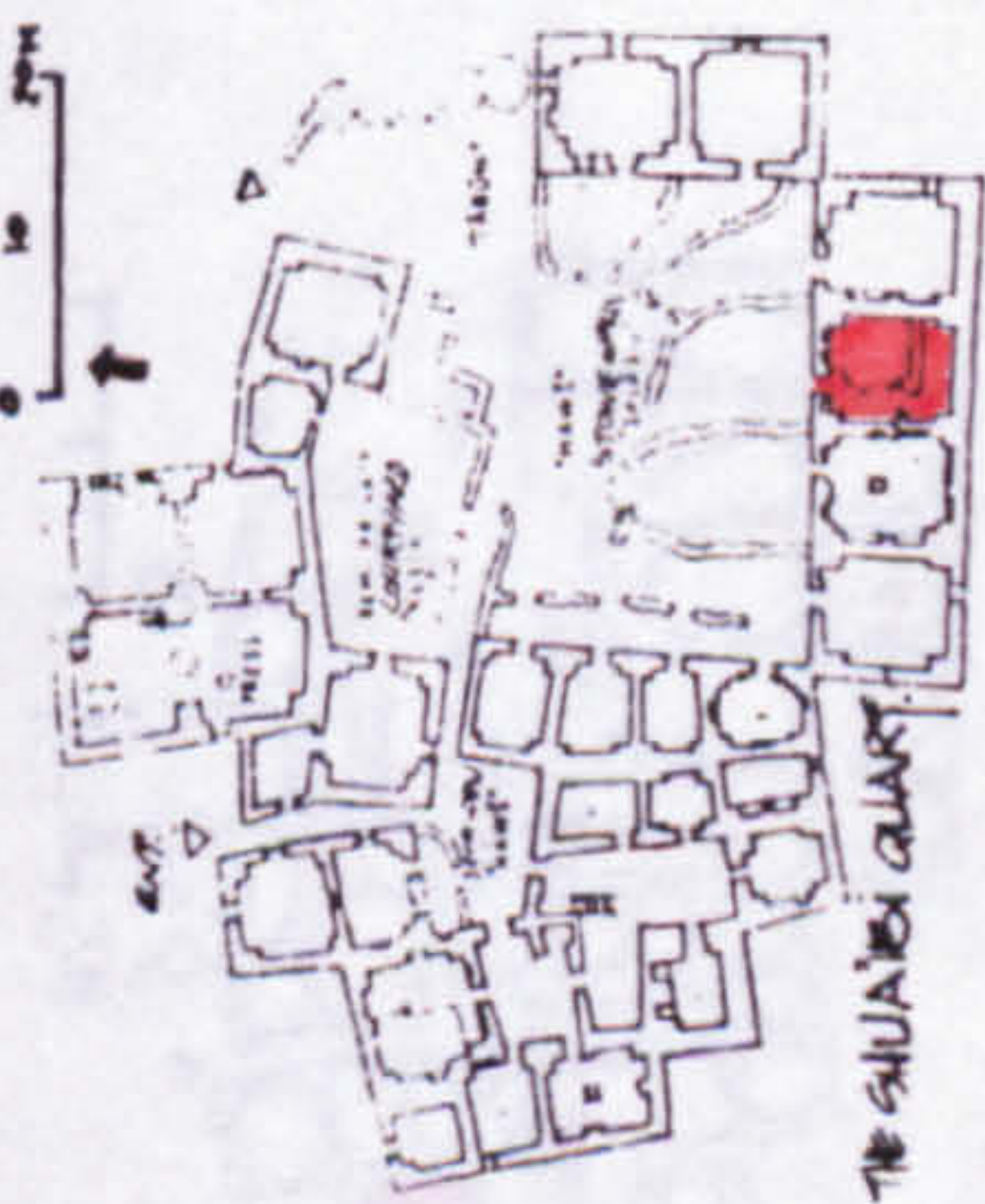
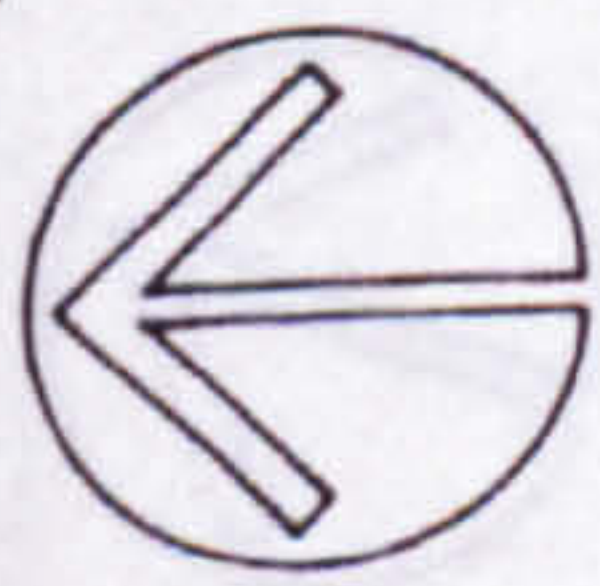
The Shu'aibi houses were significantly different from those of the Barghouthis discussed above (which had much more in common with town houses than with peasant dwellings).

The Shu'aibi houses were typical peasant houses, found in most of the central highland villages. Although houses varied in their details, they were basically variations on the same theme. No significant differences were observed between the different fallaheen houses.

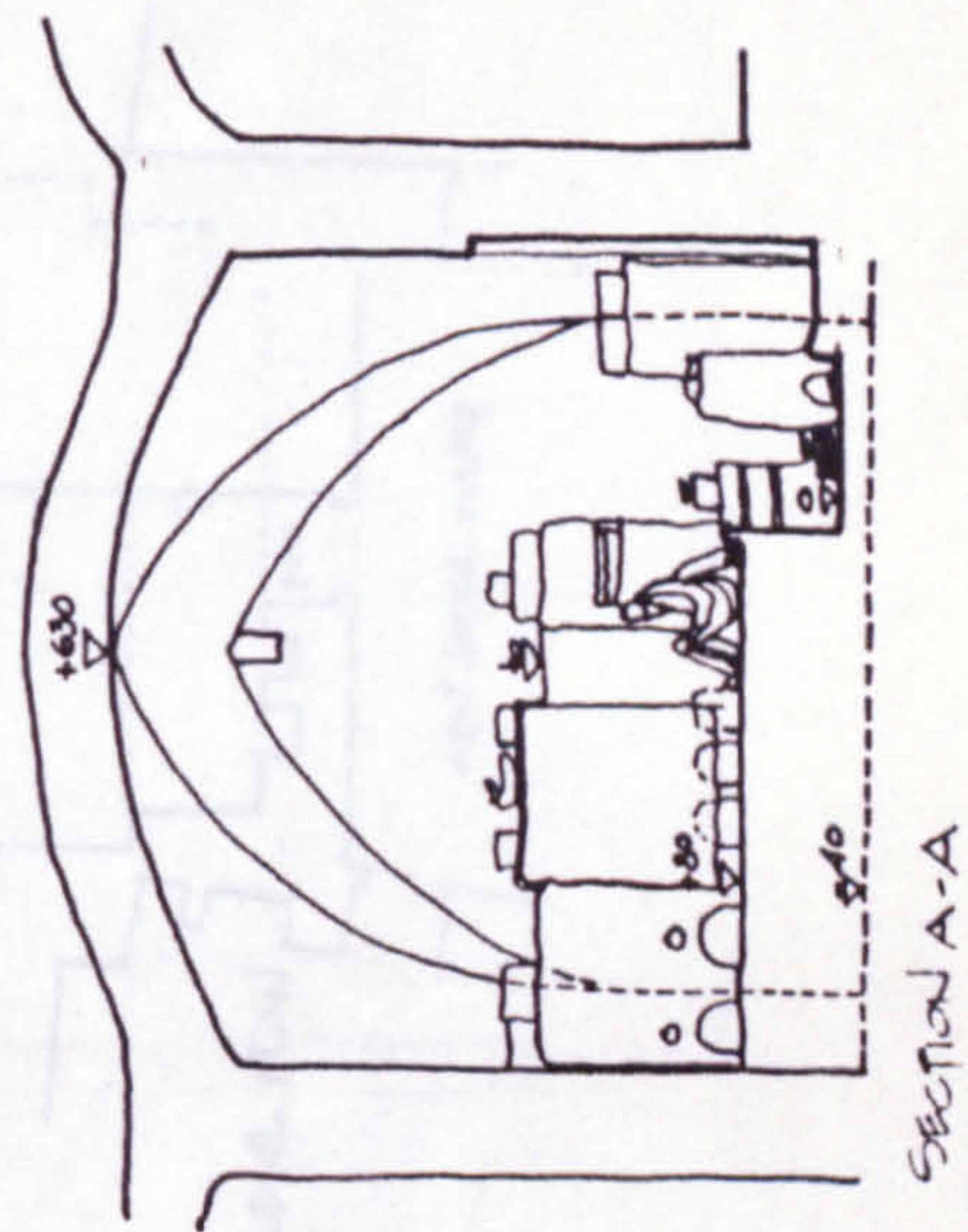
Figure 4.38 illustrates the five variations on one theme which will be discussed at length below. Variations A, B, C and D were common to other villages (see appendix 4.1), while variation E seems to have been found only in Deir Ghassaneh.

The house (dar pl.dur) in Arabic refers both to the physical

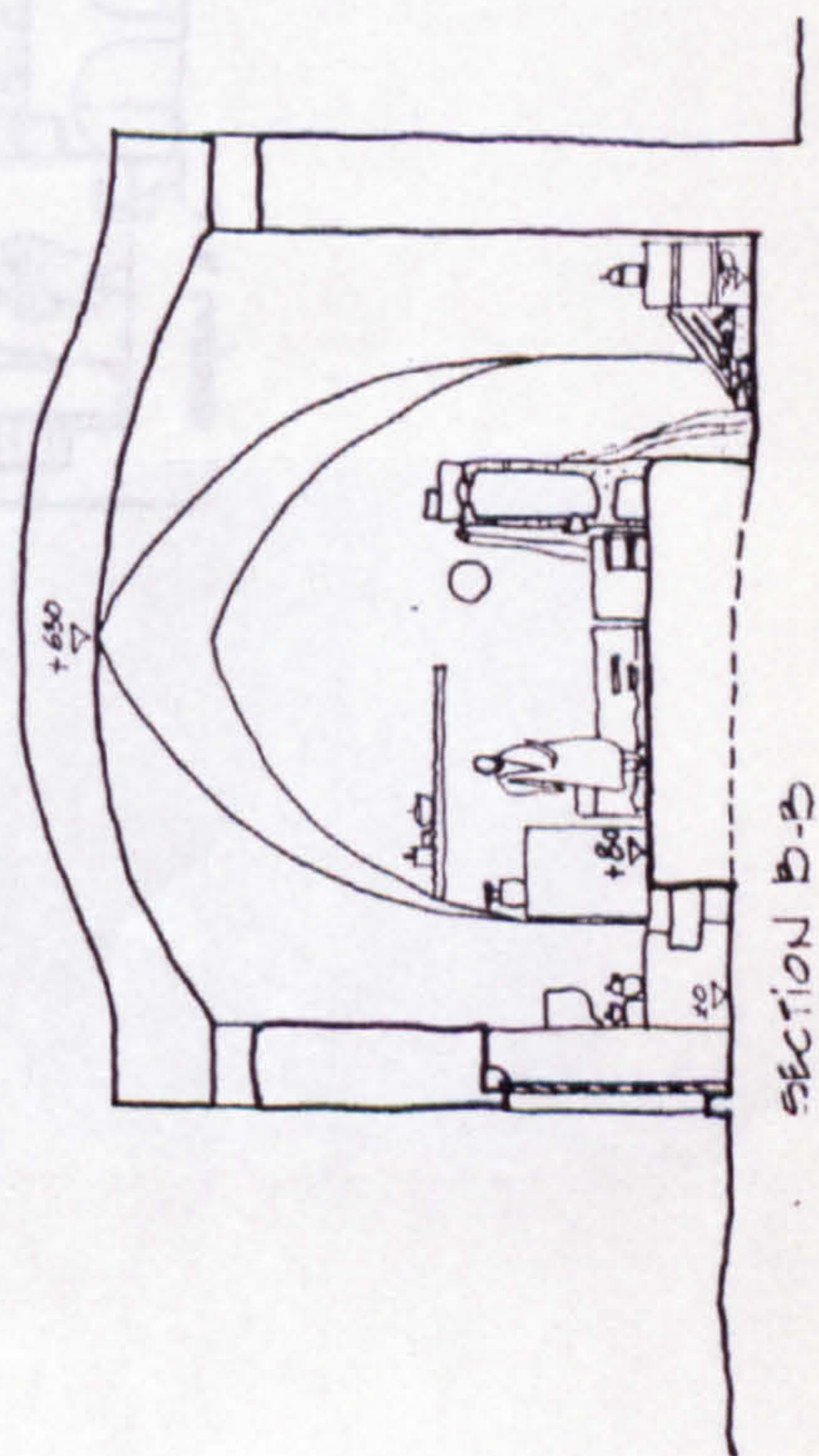
Fig. 4.38 A
 Dier Ghassaneh Dar Bahiyyeh
 Surveyed 1986
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PLAN

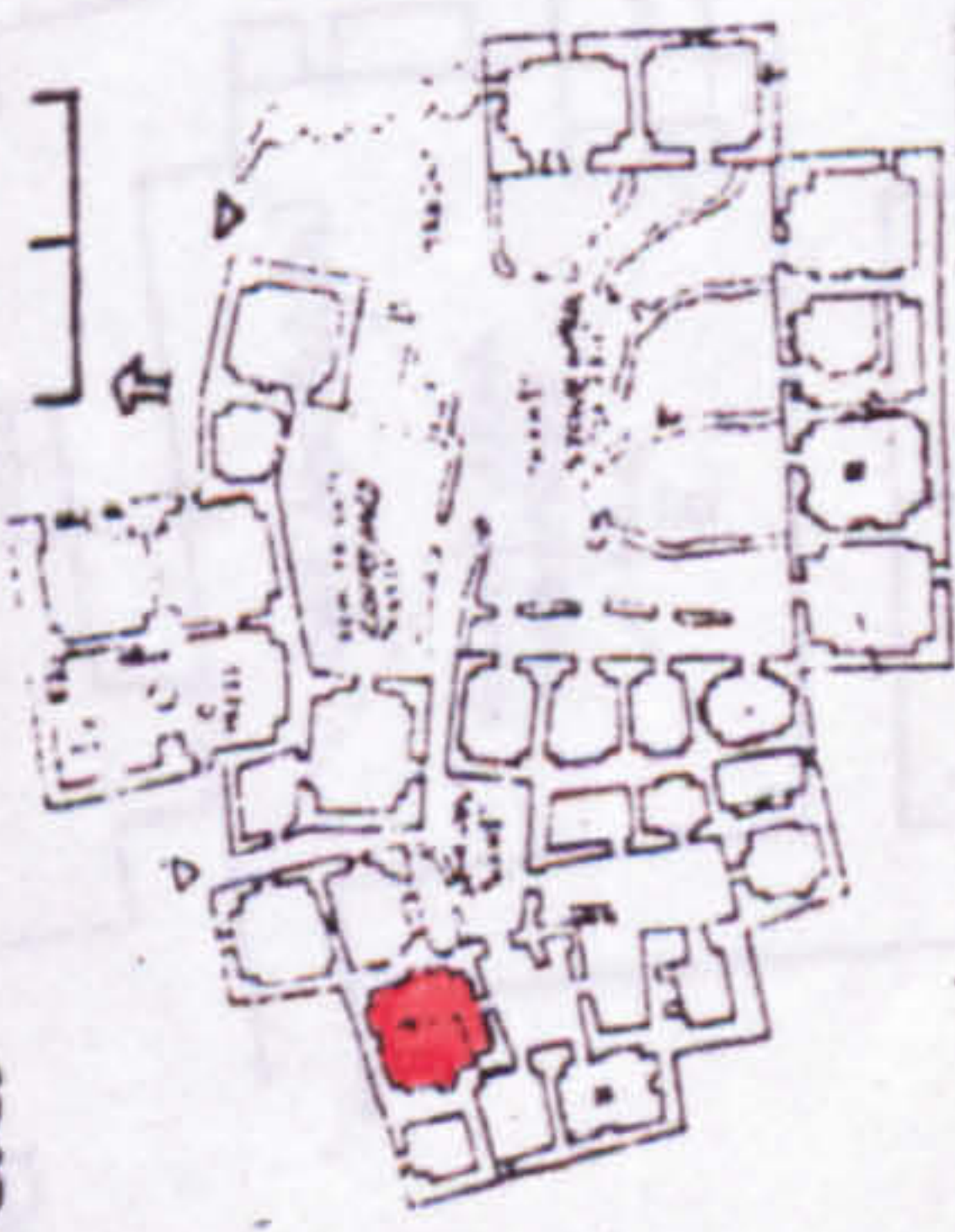
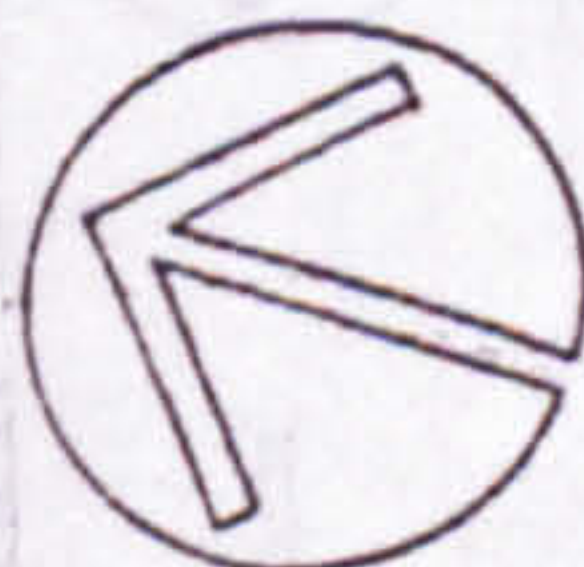


SECTION A-A

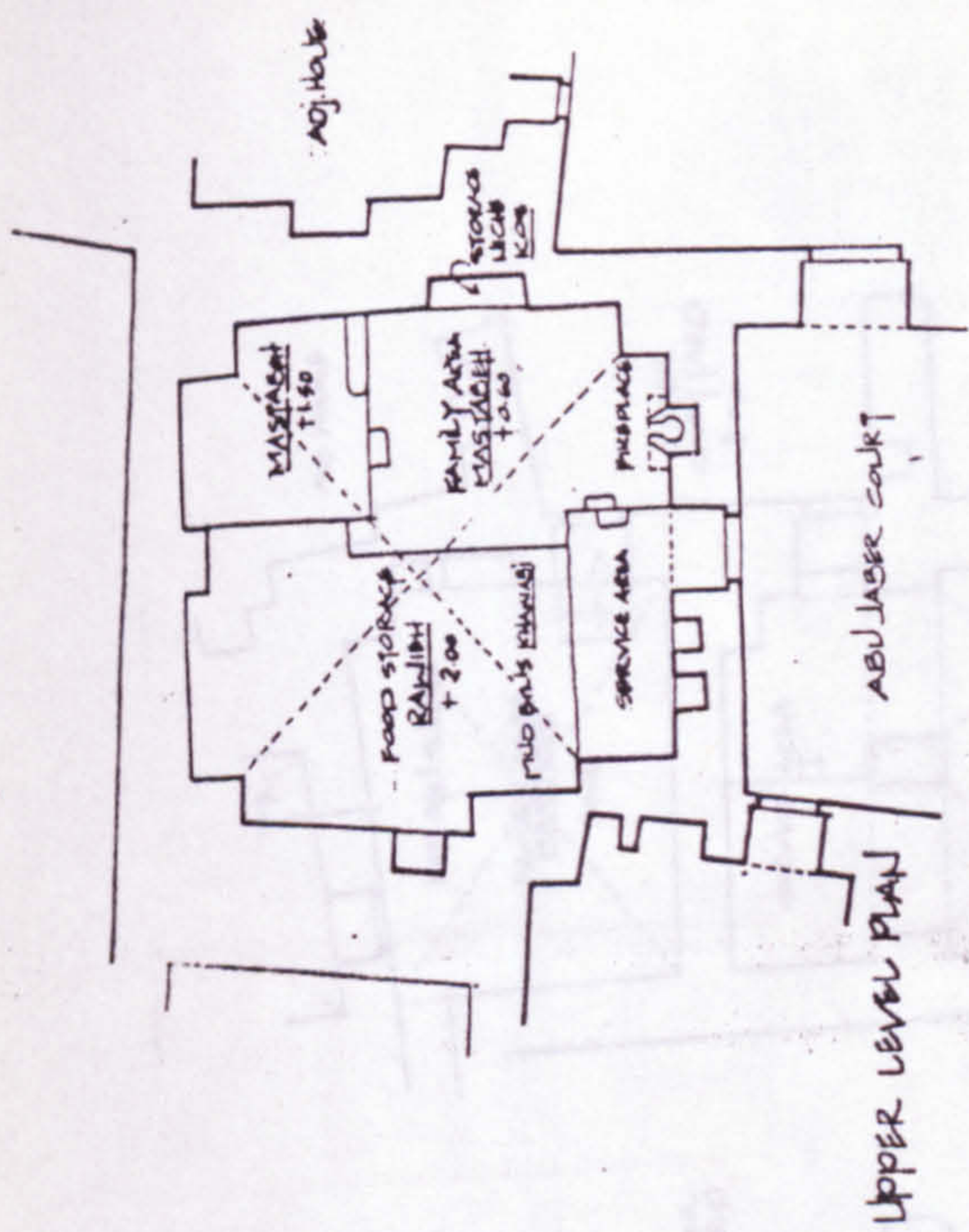


SECTION B-B

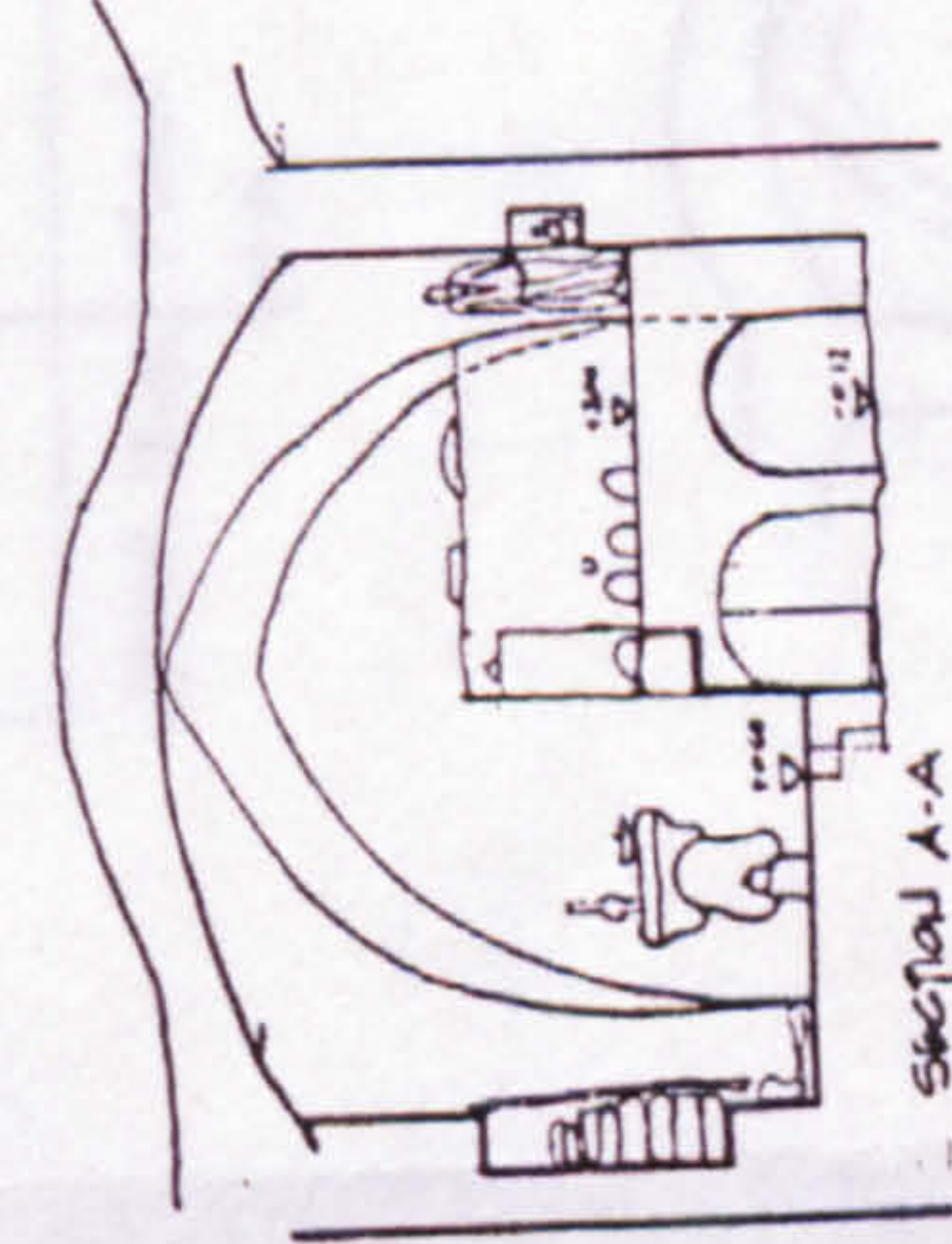
Fig. 4.38b
 Dar Mahmoud
 Deir Ghassaneh
 Surveyed 1986
 scale: 1:100



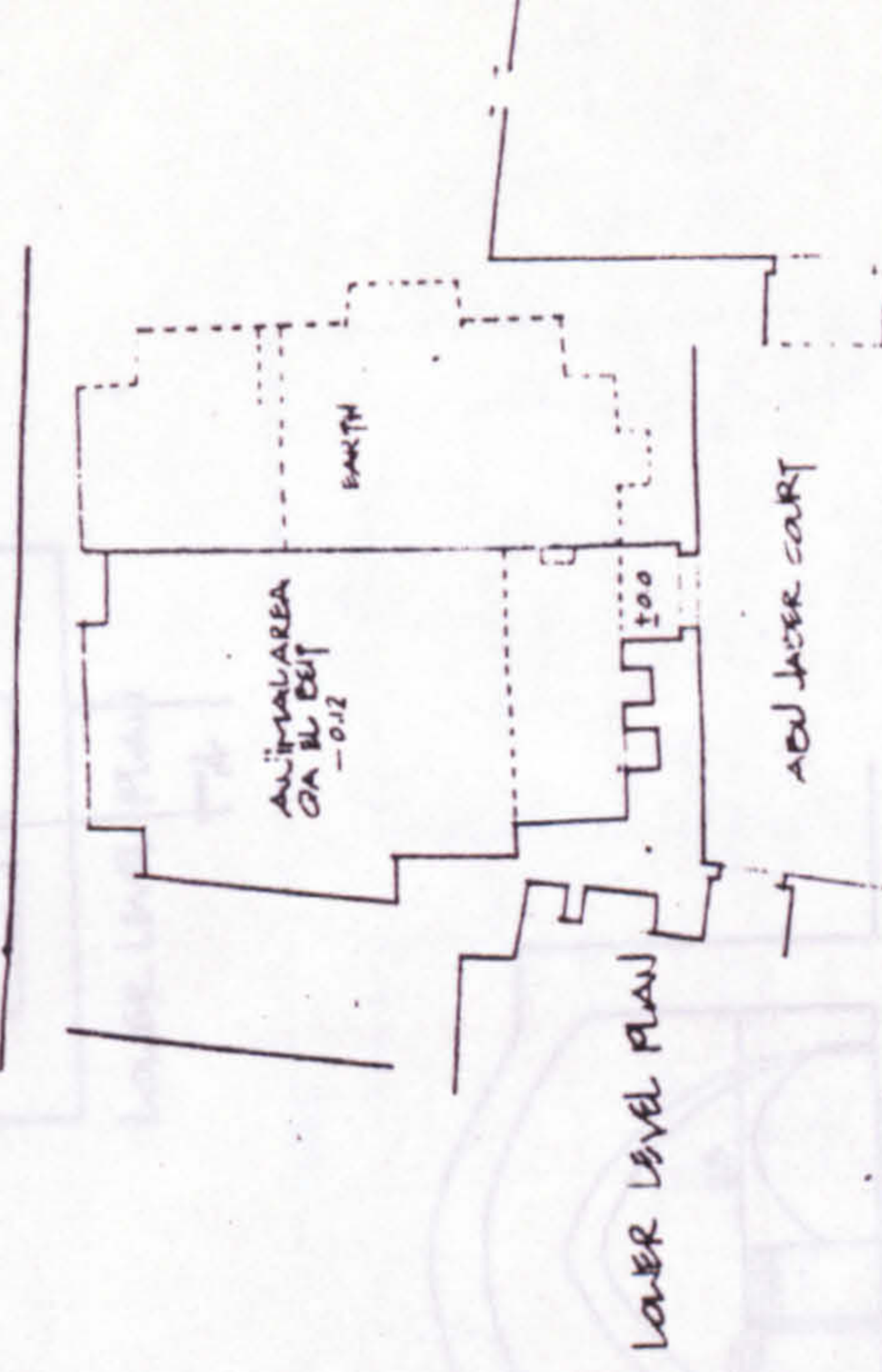
THE SHALIBI QUARTER



UPPER LEVEL PLAN



SECTION A-A



LOWER LEVEL PLAN

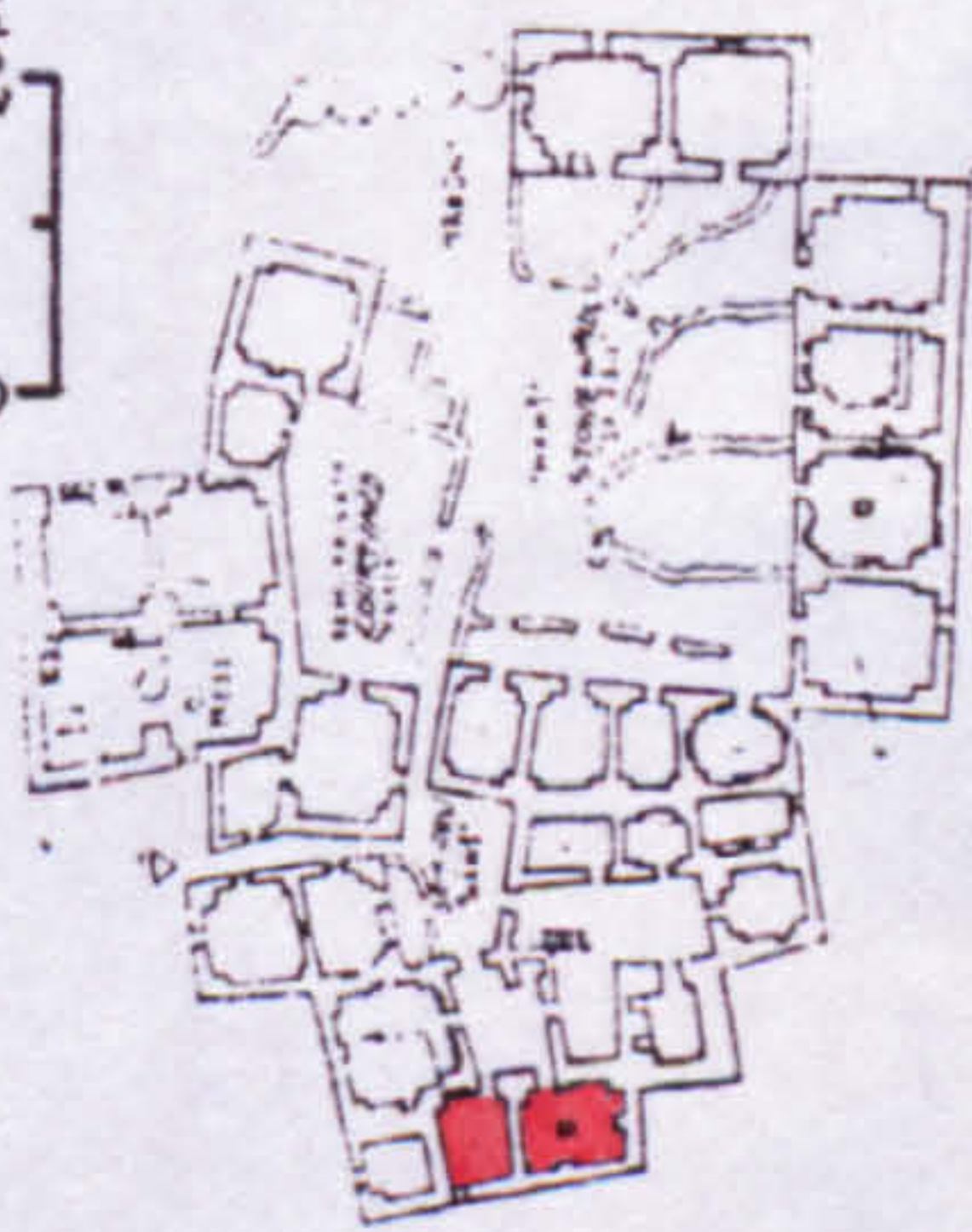
Fig. 4.38 c&d

Deir Ghassaneh Dar Abu Jaber



Scale

0 20m



THE SHU'ABI QUARTER

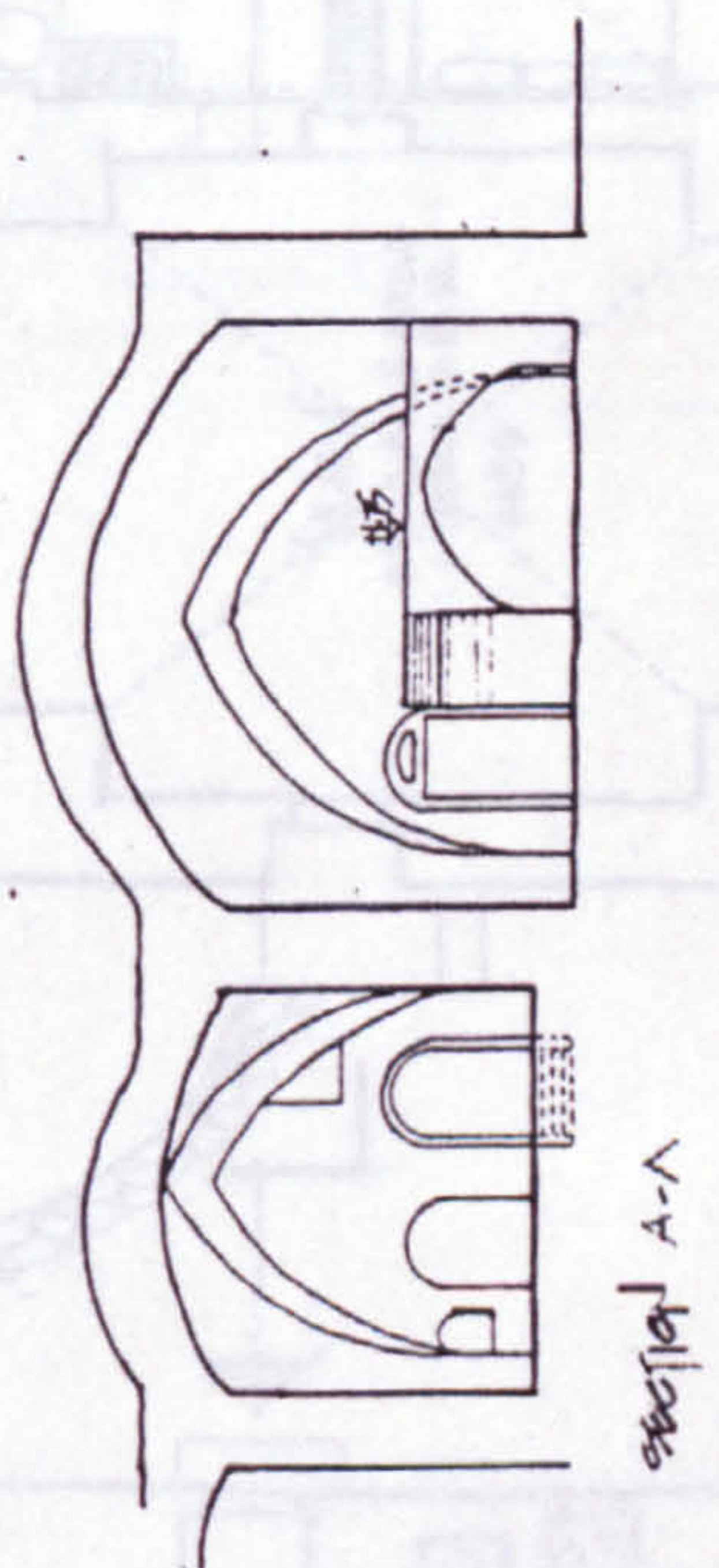
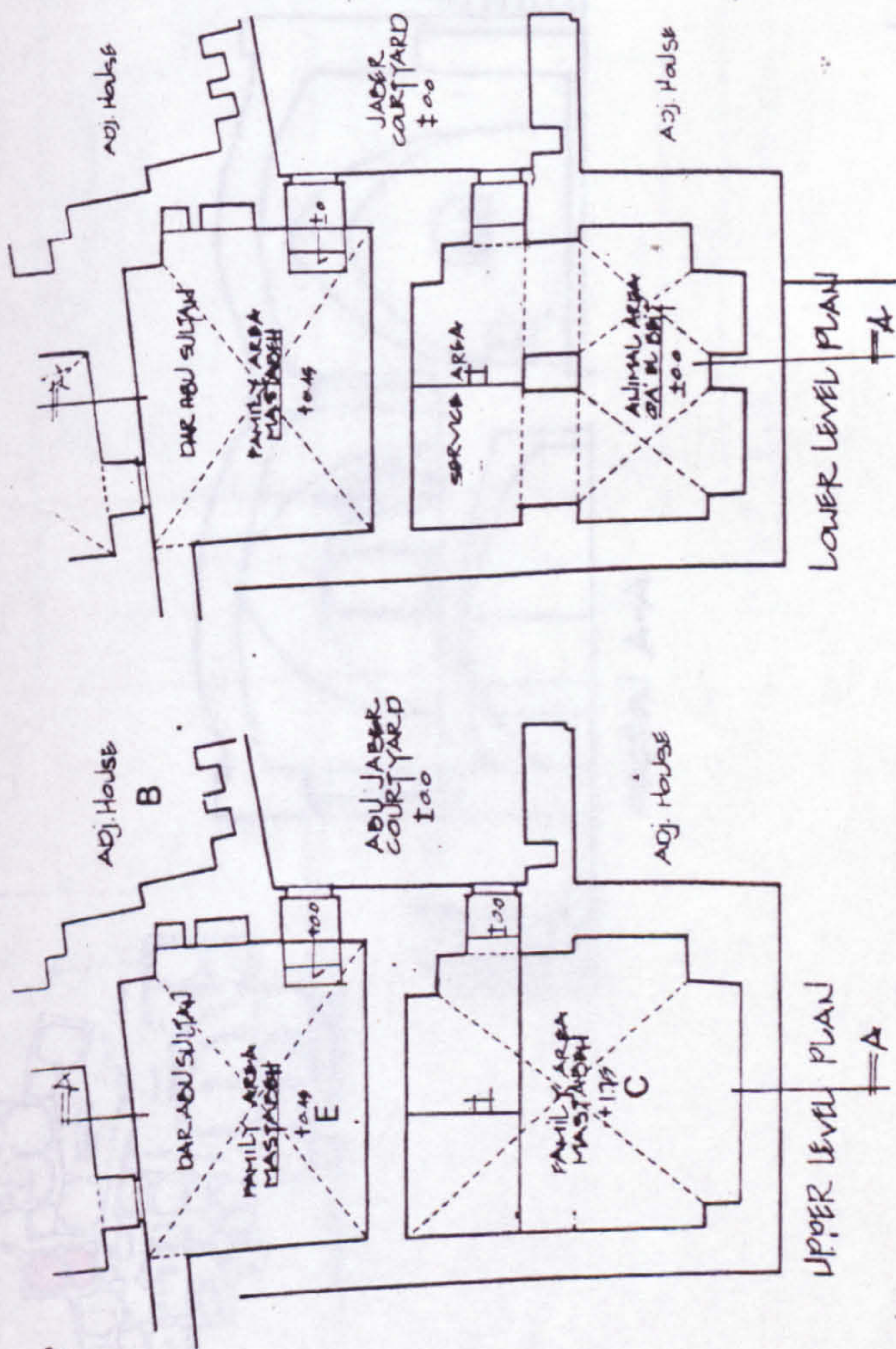


Fig. 4.38E.

Deir Ghassaneh

Dar Muyassar

Surveyed 1986

scale: 0 1 2 3m

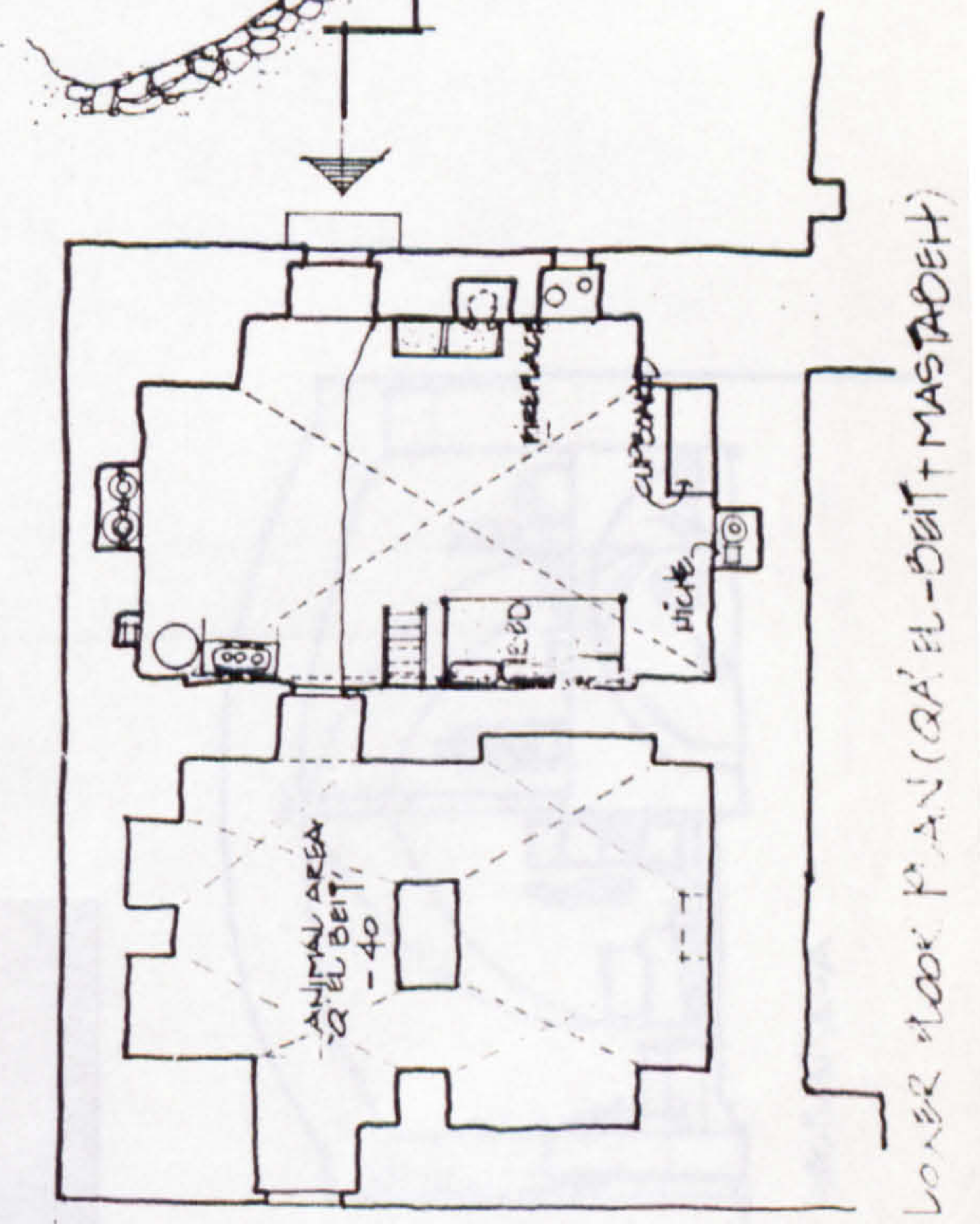
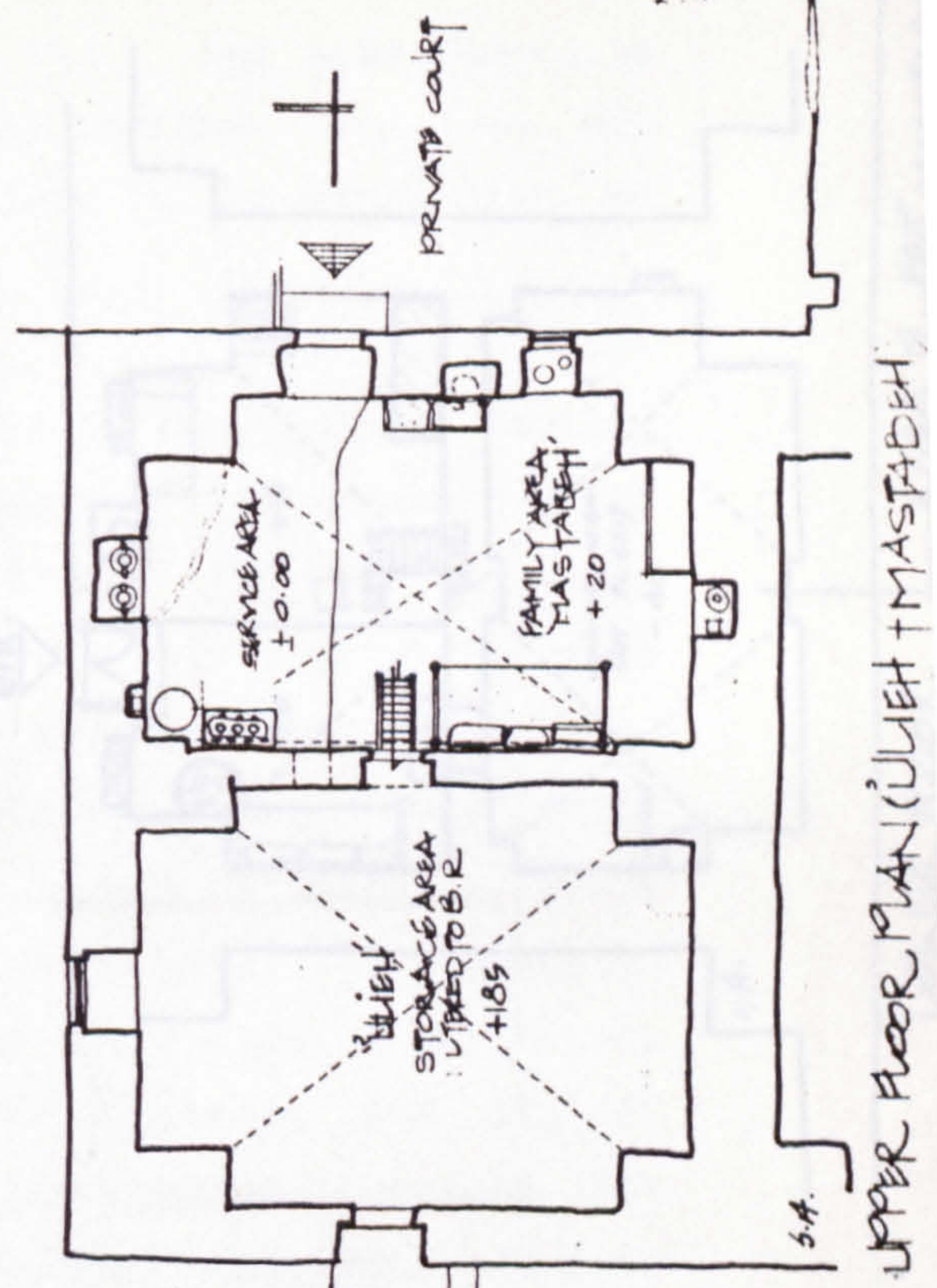
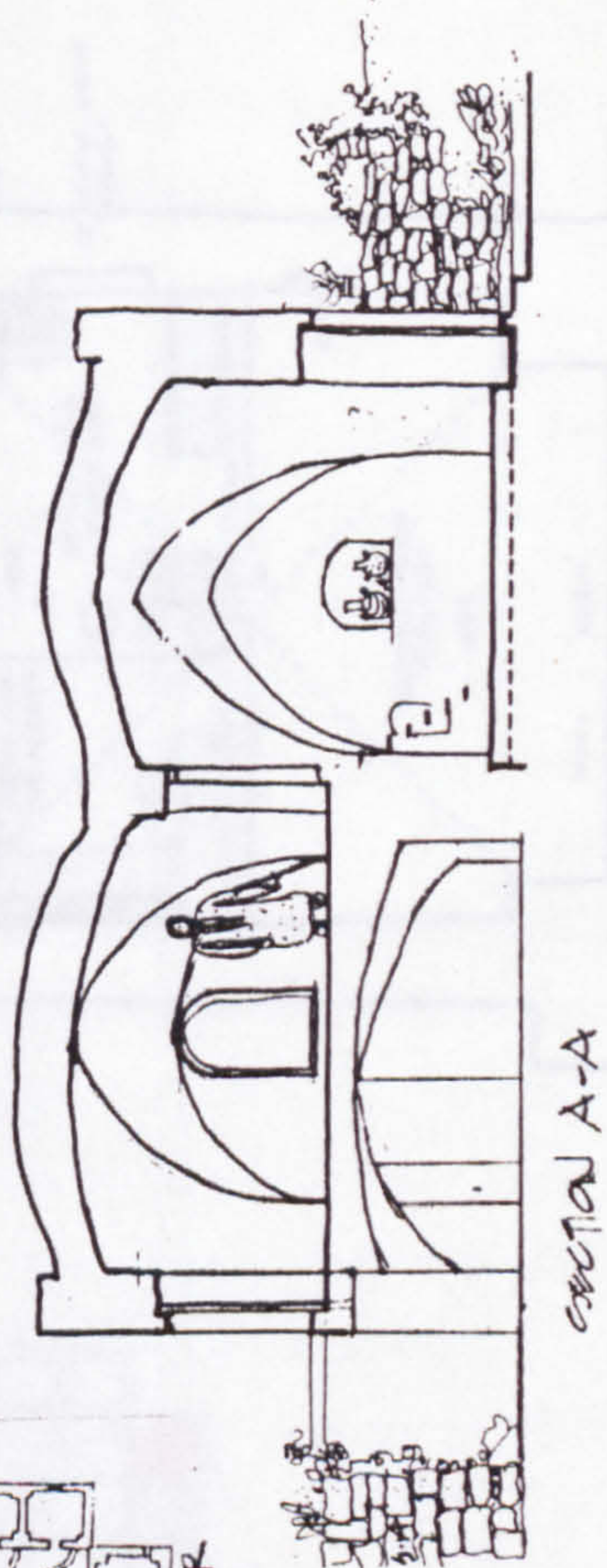
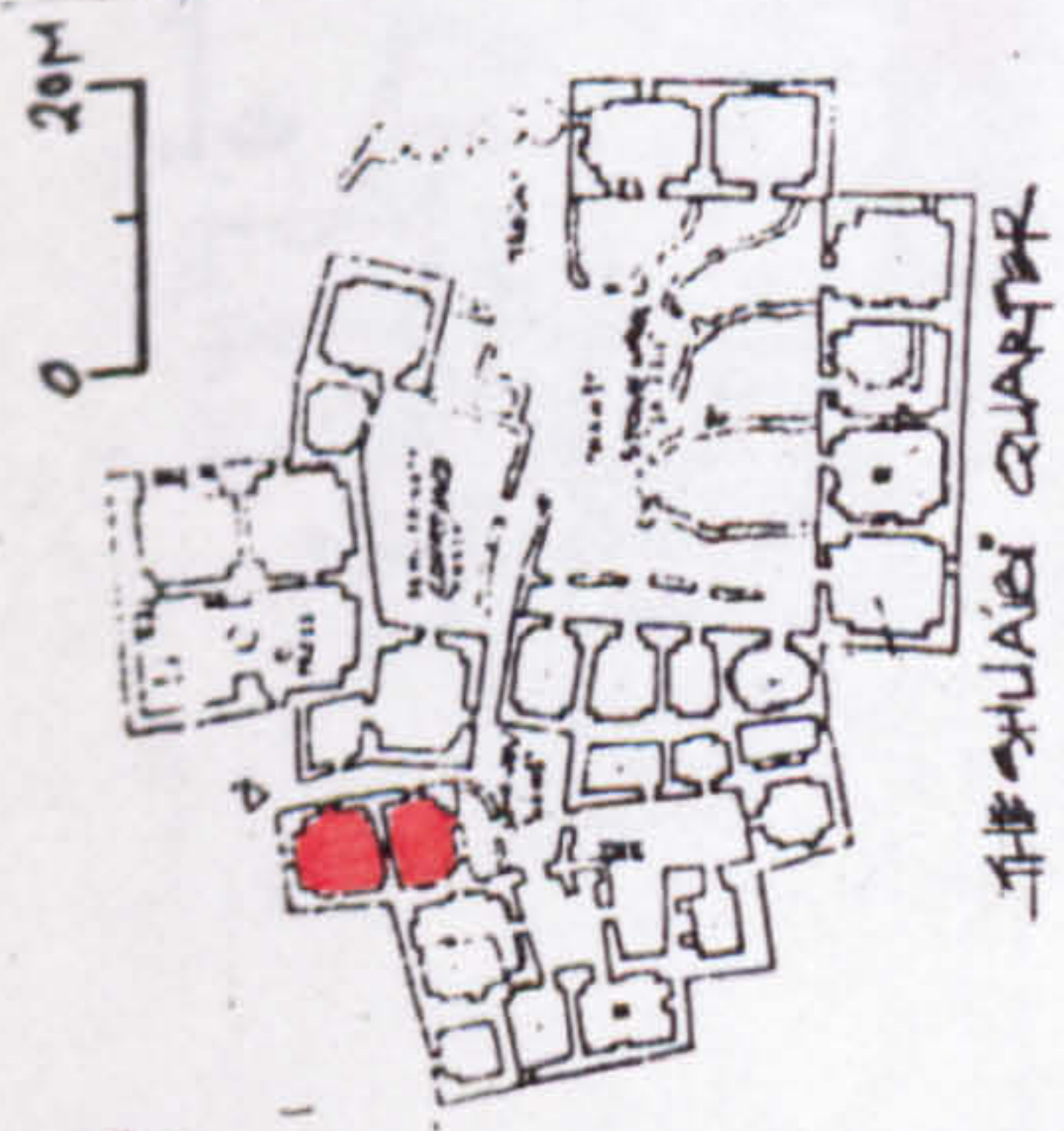
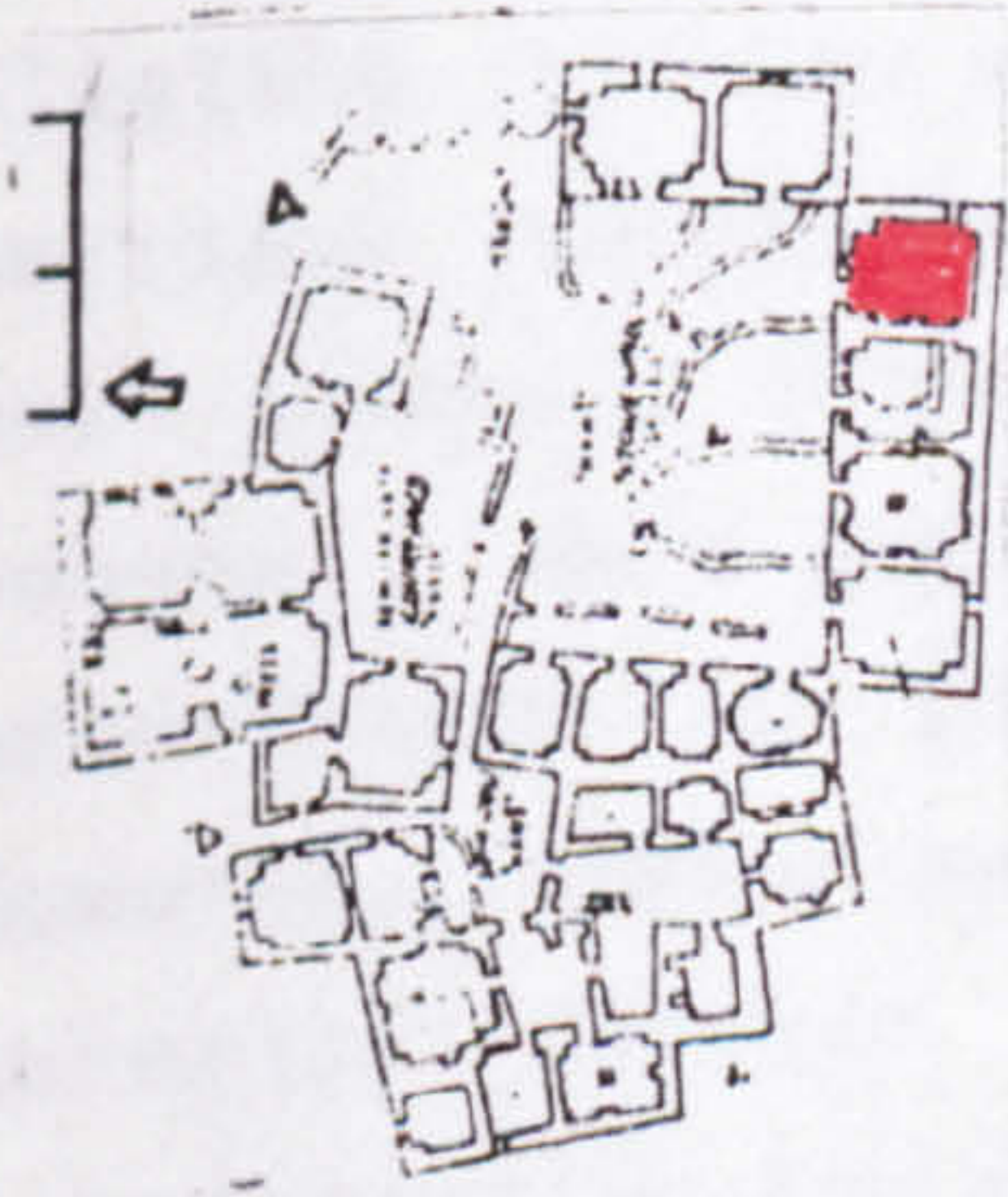
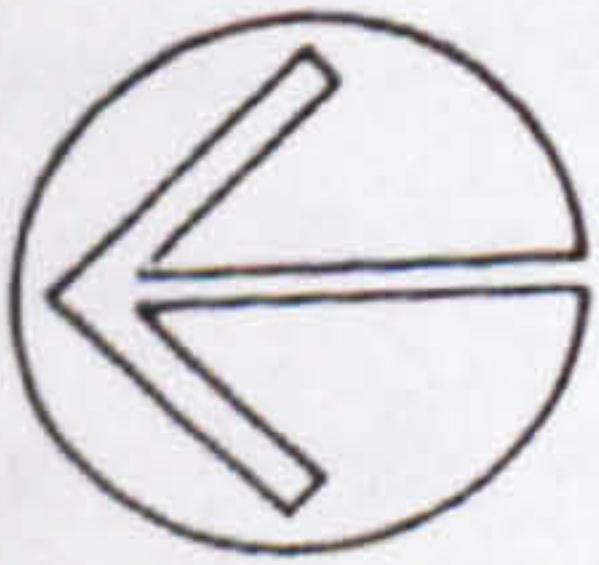


Fig. 4.38E

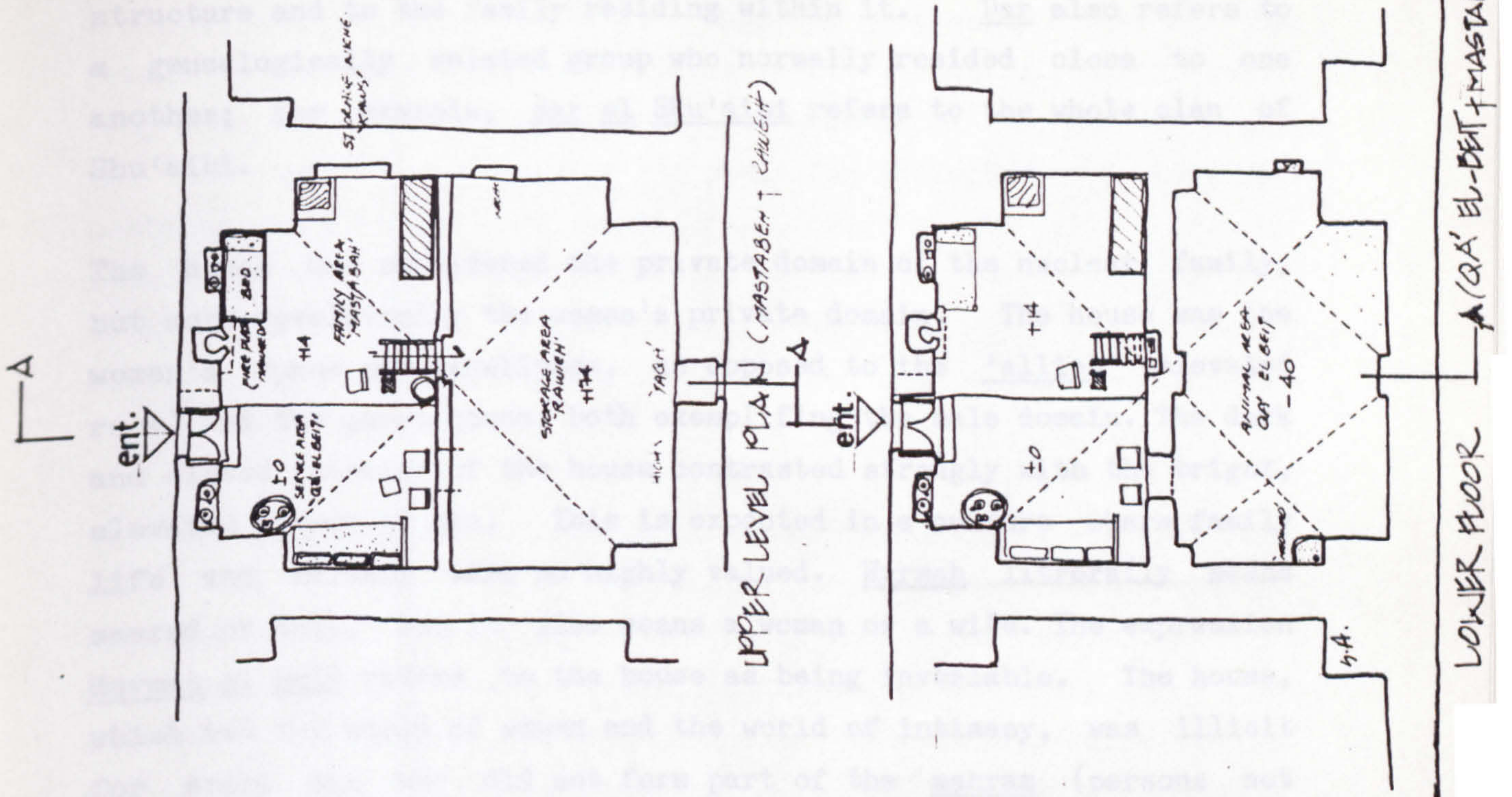
Deir Ghassaneh Dar Abu-Ziad

Surveyed 1986

scale: 0 1 2 3m



THE SHJAIBI QUARTER



structure and to the family residing within it. Dar also refers to a genealogically related group who normally resided close to one another; for example, dar el Shu'aibi refers to the whole clan of Shu'aibi.

The house was considered the private domain of the nuclear family, but more specifically the women's private domain. The house was the women's space par excellence, as opposed to the 'allieh (elevated room) and the guest-house, both exemplifying the male domain. The dark and closed interior of the house contrasted strongly with the bright, elevated spaces of men. This is expected in a culture where family life and privacy were so highly valued. Hurmah literally means sacred or holy, but it also means a woman or a wife. The expression Hurmat el beit refers to the house as being inviolable. The house, which was the world of women and the world of intimacy, was illicit for every man who did not form part of the mahram (persons not eligible by law as spouses). Only those that had entered into marriage relations with the family were allowed to enter. Males were normally restricted and discouraged from visiting other people's houses. Male guests, including relatives and friends, were either entertained in the village guest-house or in the clan's 'allieh. However, there were no restrictions on female visitors, who were normally either neighbours (who in most cases were by definition relatives) or the relatives of the wife.

"The man is the cropper janna (i.e. bread winner) and the woman is the builder" banna (er-rejjal janna wil marah banna) is a revealing common saying referring to a clear division of labour as well as a clear demarcation of men's and women's domains. While the man spent his time working in the fields, the woman took care of the house; hence she is described as a "builder", a reference to her role in managing the house affairs.

Although the Shu'aibi women were highly influenced by the laws of seclusion and the strictness with which the women of the Barghouthis were guarded, they, like most of the fallaheen women, moved about freely. While men left the houses at sunrise for the fields, women spent most of their day in and around the house cleaning, tidying,

washing, and preparing the food. Whenever necessary, women left the house to the water well in the Rwais valley to fill up their jars. They also went to the fields to collect brush-wood for fuel and grass for the animals, or carried the meals for their fathers, sons or husbands working out in the fields. During the olive picking season, women spent most of the day out in the fields helping the males of their family. These clearly demarcated roles in the sexual division of labour prevailed in the Palestinian village until the 1950s (Nasir, 1974: 77).

The Shu'aibi houses (Fig. 4.38), like most other fallaheen dwellings, were massive stone structures. The single floor, horizontally-expanding houses sat solidly on the rocky landscape. The adjacently-built houses, with rounded vaults protruding on the roofs, were made out of quarry-faced masonry or rubble stones with wide joints (unlike the vertical two or three storey Bargouthi houses, built with smoothly cut square stones with hardly visible mortar joints). Sometimes the whole front elevation was white-washed or plastered.

Although the qiblah (direction of Mecca) has a symbolic meaning for all muslim communities, and a number of acts must be performed with one's face directed towards Mecca (such as prayers, turning the body of the dead, directing the head of the slaughtered animal, etc.), there does not seem to be an "ideal direction" or a symbolic importance accorded to the orientation of the house. As figure 4.32 illustrates, entry doors to the different houses were directed towards all cardinal points. However for climatic reasons, it was recommended to avoid the strong western winds and rains. But again this consideration did not seem to take priority in directing the house (Abu-Nada, interview: 1986).

In most cases, the location of the door was shifted to the side of the front elevation, hence giving the family maximum space, but more important, providing maximum privacy. The one entry door to the house gained significance by being the single element which marked a critical transition to the private family space. The arch of this only door, or its post and lintels, were often white-washed in order to accentuate its importance and differentiate it from the solid



Fig. 4.39: Main facades and entry doors were often white-washed

closed walls. White-wash was also an expression of delight and cleanliness; "White is happiness, white is light, white is delight" says Muyassar, one of the Shua'ibi women. "Walla latrushek ya dar ba'd el shied bel hennah en 'ado lehbab". ("I promise to paint you, O house, with hennah after I white-wash you, if the beloved comes back"), goes the fallaheen song that women sang during festive occasions.

In addition to its symbolic meaning and its effect, the fallaheen believed that white-wash, which was made out of lime (shid), kept insects away. The wooden door panel was in some cases painted bluish-green, a sign of prosperity and blessings. The white-washed arch and blue painted panel together gave emphasis to this very important element of the house (Fig.4.39). The elevated threshold, with the symbolic meaning accorded to it, defined clearly the boundary between two worlds; that of the open public and the closed, private, intimate and private world. Both the post of the door and the threshold played a doubly significant role during marriage celebrations. The bride stuck sour dough (khamireh) and a green leaf on the post of her in-laws' house before she entered the house. The dough, made of the "sacred" grain, symbolised a fertile bride as it fermented and swelled (Granquist, 1931: 101). A decorated water jar was put over the bride's head before she stepped over the threshold into the house. "Water is life", said Muyassar. "A

spoon of sugar was sometimes added to the water so that the life of the newly-weds would be sweet" she adds. Both the bride and the groom, who carried a long dagger symbolizing his manhood, must step over the threshold so as to avoid any harm of the djinn residing under the threshold. It was, and still is, believed that a newly married couple was like a newly-constructed house, exposed to evil influence (Granquist, 1931: 10).

The fallah's dependency and close interaction with nature, was reflected in the internal organisation of the house. The placement of man, animal, and agricultural produce under one roof with one entrance, and the hierarchical division of the house into corresponding areas at different levels, were by no means accidental, but were symbolic of the various values assigned to the divisions of the house. A wall made up of rubble stone and lattice wood separated the front family space (el mastabeh) from the animal space (qa' el beit) located in the lower back space and from the food storage area (er-rawieh) located in the upper back space (Fig. 4.38E).



Fig. 4.40: Interior of a peasant house

Qa' el-beit which literally means "the bottom part of the house" referred to the entrance area which was used as a service area. A small raised platform with a water jar located on a wall niche above it was used for washing dishes, clothes and bathing. Qa' el-beit also referred to the lower back area (normally a step or two lower from the service area). Animals such as sheep, goats, hens, cows and donkeys were kept here, especially at night. All kinds of tools and implements - firewood, barrels, mud jars, mud bins, and animal manure - were also found in qa' el-beit. For the fallah, the animals were his "valuables" and by keeping them inside with him, he assured their safety and by extension, his own safety. The one entrance and the one roof shared by the two demonstrated a strong unity, or a lack of differentiation, between the fallah and his

animals, which helped him work the land.

The same was true for the agricultural produce, e.g. grain, wheat, sesame and lentils, and dried figs, which were kept in a high place out of reach of the animals. A wooden ladder (fig.4.36E) placed in the middle of the mastabeh connected it to the dark rawieh above. Here was where the fallah's food storage (muneh) was kept in big mud bins (khawabi), or in small mud containers or barrels. The big mud bins usually formed a wall, which separated the rawieh from the mastabeh below.



Fig.4.41: Mud bins (khawabi) separated the different areas

To the left of the entrance door and a step higher than the service area, lay the family space (el-mastabeh). In it all family daily activities -sitting, eating, cooking, sleeping- were performed. This was the one space which encompassed the whole life cycle of the fallah; here he was born, got married, raised his children and met his creator. There were no physical partitions which divided the mastabeh. In winter, when the use of the frontyard was restricted, almost all female activities were performed in the mastabeh. In summer, the mastabeh was hardly used, except for sleeping.

The mastabeh had almost no furnishings except for the few box-like mud bins (khawabi). These bins, which were usually made and decorated by women, were placed against the walls. In these khawabi, the family's belongings and small amounts of food for every day consumption were kept. There were also big bins which functioned as main dividers between the mastabeh and rawieh as well as storage cabins (Fig. 4.41). A number of small niches (taqat) were used for

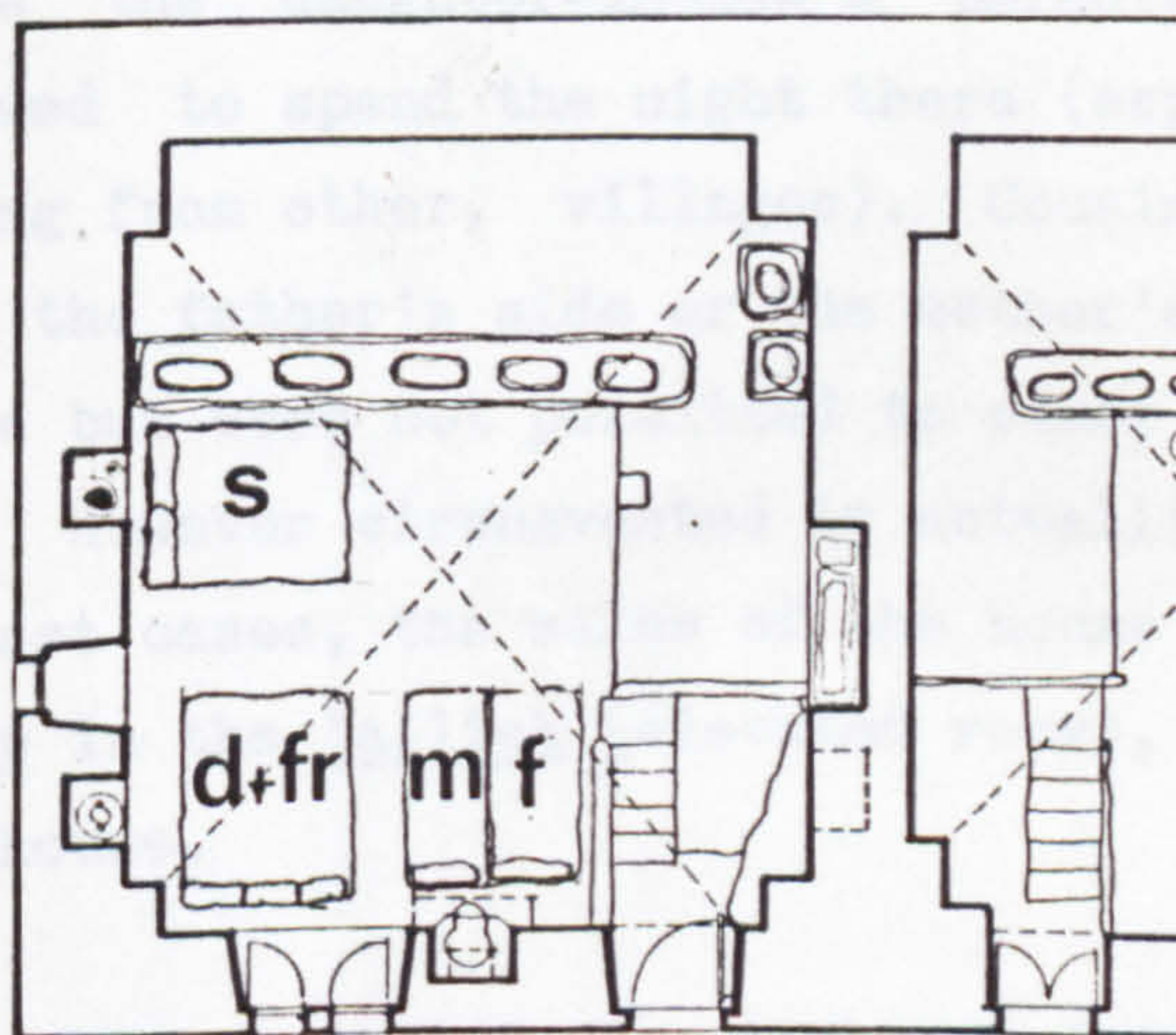
storing cooking utensils, clothes, small amounts of food and other family belongings. The kos was a big arch recessed in the wall ; in it mattresses, blankets and pillows were stored during the day.

The fireplace (mawqed or udjak) was always located on the same wall as that of the entrance door (Fig. 4.42). This was the focus of all activities which took place at the mastabeh during the cold and rainy winter season. It was the only source of heat in the cold winter days. It served as a kitchen around which women sat and prepared and cooked the family meals. In the evenings, the whole family normally gathered around the fireplace as they chatted or listened to the bickering between husband and wife or, frequently, between the mother and her daughter in-law.



Fig. 4.42: The fireplace

At night, mattresses were rolled out of the qaws and spread out, covering almost the whole area of the mastabeh. Although there did not seem to be a strict method for sleeping arrangements (Fig. 4.43) (at least not from the description of the fallaheen), still invisible partitions divided the parental sleeping area from that of their children or other elderly members (aunt, grandmother, etc.) living in the same house. The husband and wife normally slept on one or two separate mattresses; next to them slept their children. While young sons and daughters slept together on one mattress, older daughters and sons tended to separate and sleep in groups. Unlike other fallaheen where married sons and their wives lived with the in-laws, the Shu'aibis were very strict about having the newly married couple live in a separate house. The bridal chest (sandouq), which the daughter-in-law usually brought with her from her father's house played, a significant role in defining the parental sleeping space. The chest in which the wife kept her clothes and belongings belonged exclusively to her and she alone had the key to it. Not even her husband had the right to open it. This chest symbolized her ties



f: father
m: mother
fr: female relatives
d: daughter
s: sons

Fig. 4.43: Some laws concerning sleeping arrangements
with her own family (Fig. 4.44).



Fig. 4.44: The bridal chest (sandouk el 'aruse)

In the rare cases where the newly married son was not able to build his own house (which was normally next to his father's), the rawieh of the house was altered in such a way as to be used as a sleeping area for the bridal couple. This was the case in houses no. 4 and 21 in 1940 and 1946. In other cases, as in house no. 5., parents slept in the rawieh while their son and daughter-in-law slept on the mastabeh (only for one month). In all cases, the placement of the bride's box created a "private" space for the newly married couple.

The Mahram

Not all those who were permitted into the house were allowed to sleep there. The law of mahram was the governing principle. Mahram allowed access to all individuals that were not eligible as spouses. Hence the daughter-in-law's parents, sisters and brothers were allowed to spend the night there (especially if they happened to be coming from other, villages). Cousins (iben el 'am and Iben el khal) from the father's side or the mother's side were allowed to enter the house but were not permitted to sleep there. These mahram regulations were however circumvented in actuality by practical considerations. In most cases, the males of the house and male visitors were taken to sleep in the 'allieh (elevated room), while the women always slept in the house.

The degree to which sleeping restrictions were observed depended to a great extent on the age of the women in the house. Restrictions were much observed when the daughter-in-law was still a bride. For the first week of their marriage, the bridal couple were left alone as all other members of the household left the house to sleep at relatives or out in the frontyard, if weather conditions allowed. In general, elderly women were not subject to the mahram principles.

Finally, the house played a significant role during festive occasions such as marriages, births, and circumcisions. On most of these occasions, ritual proceedings took place in and around the house. Although such occasions tended to obliterate some of the restrictions observed against having ghurabah (outsiders) males enter the house, the inside of the house remained predominantly a female domain.



Fig.4.45: Location of the lower quarter

- Lower quarter houses
- Courtyards of houses
- Sacred tombs
- Communal oil press
- Communal cemetery

The fallaheen areas included two major quarters: the shu'aibi quarter and the fallaheen lower quarter, in addition to the two small Misshel and Halabieh quarters (see page 85). Having so far compared at length the built-space of the Barghouthi and Shu'aibi (fallaheen) clans, I will now only summarize the most prominent spatial features that characterized the fallaheen lower quarter:

1. Unlike both the Barghouthi and the Shu'aibi quarters which were inhabited by members of two clans of a homogenous origin, the lower quarter was inhabited descendents of three different descent groups (if we except the small and marginal al-Khatib family): the Rabi group (which was the biggest and the most prominent), the Nasir, the 'Adi. These three clans (particularly the Rabi and the 'Adi) intermarried from one another, and from the rest of the fallaheen clans. Despite distinctions of descent those families were



Fig.4.46 : A general view of the lower quarter

collectively identified --and they referred to themselves--as the fallaheen of the lower quarter.

2. The heterogenous lineage of the lower quarter helps to explain the spatially defined character of this quarter. Unlike both the Barghouthi and Shu'aibi quarters which had strong external boundaries defining their compounds as a whole (e.g. back of buildings, empty lots, etc., and more significantly, defined and controlled entrances to the harah), the lower quarter had no such defined entrances to control outsiders. Internal boundaries which separated the different descent groups were thus more important than external boundaries separating them (the fallaheen) from the rest of the village as was the case with the Shu'aibis.

3. As figure 4.47 illustrated the lower quarter consisted of a number of separate compounds belonging to the different descent groups: while the Rabi and 'Adi compounds were adjacent to one another--expressing their social cohesiveness, enhanced by inter-marriage--the Nasir compound was facing away from the Rabi and 'Adi compounds.

4. The Rabi clan occupied a number of compounds. The main Rabi compound (fig.4.48) had an enclosed courtyard with a number of single family houses around it. The Rabi clan occupied another two adjacent compounds. A number of single family houses located adjacent to one another formed a row of houses, each with a small semi-private frontyard. However the road which was constructed in 1975 past through these frontyards, hence leaving the row of houses open



- Er-Rabi houses
- Nasir houses
- 'Adi houses
- Khatib houses
- Adjacent Barchouthi houses (Dawood)
- Lower quarter oil press
- Sacred tomb of el-Habil

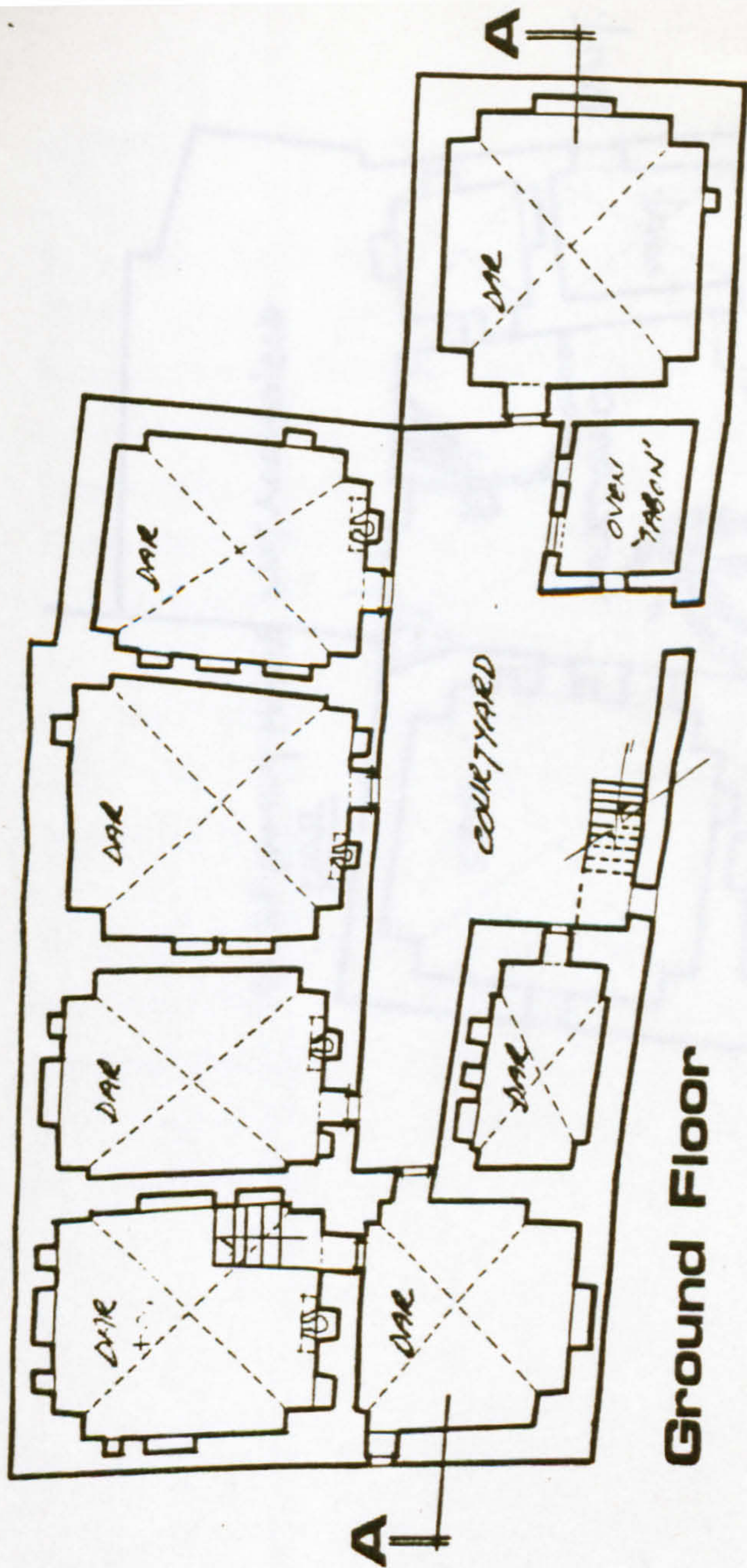
Fig.4.47 : Houses of the lower quarter

Fig. 4.48

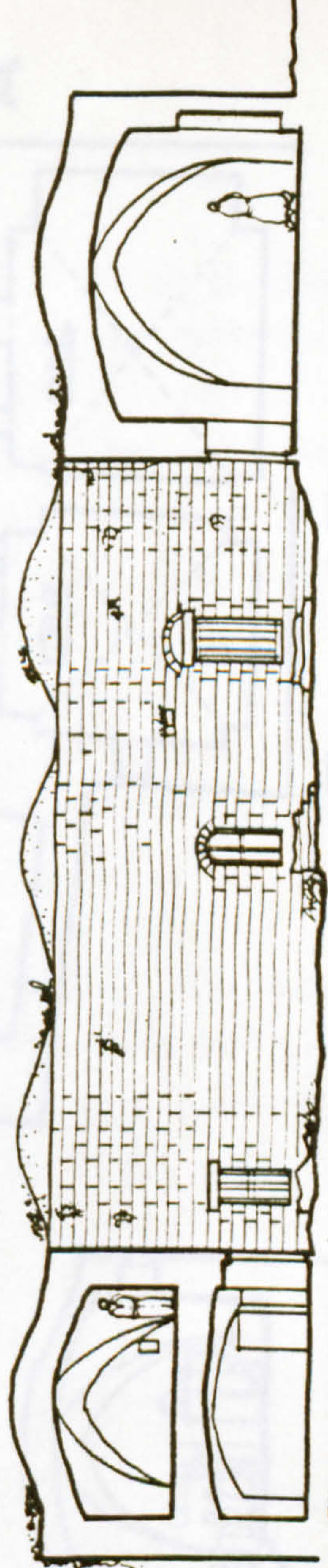
Deir Ghassaneh Dar Rabi

Surveyed 1986

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Ground Floor



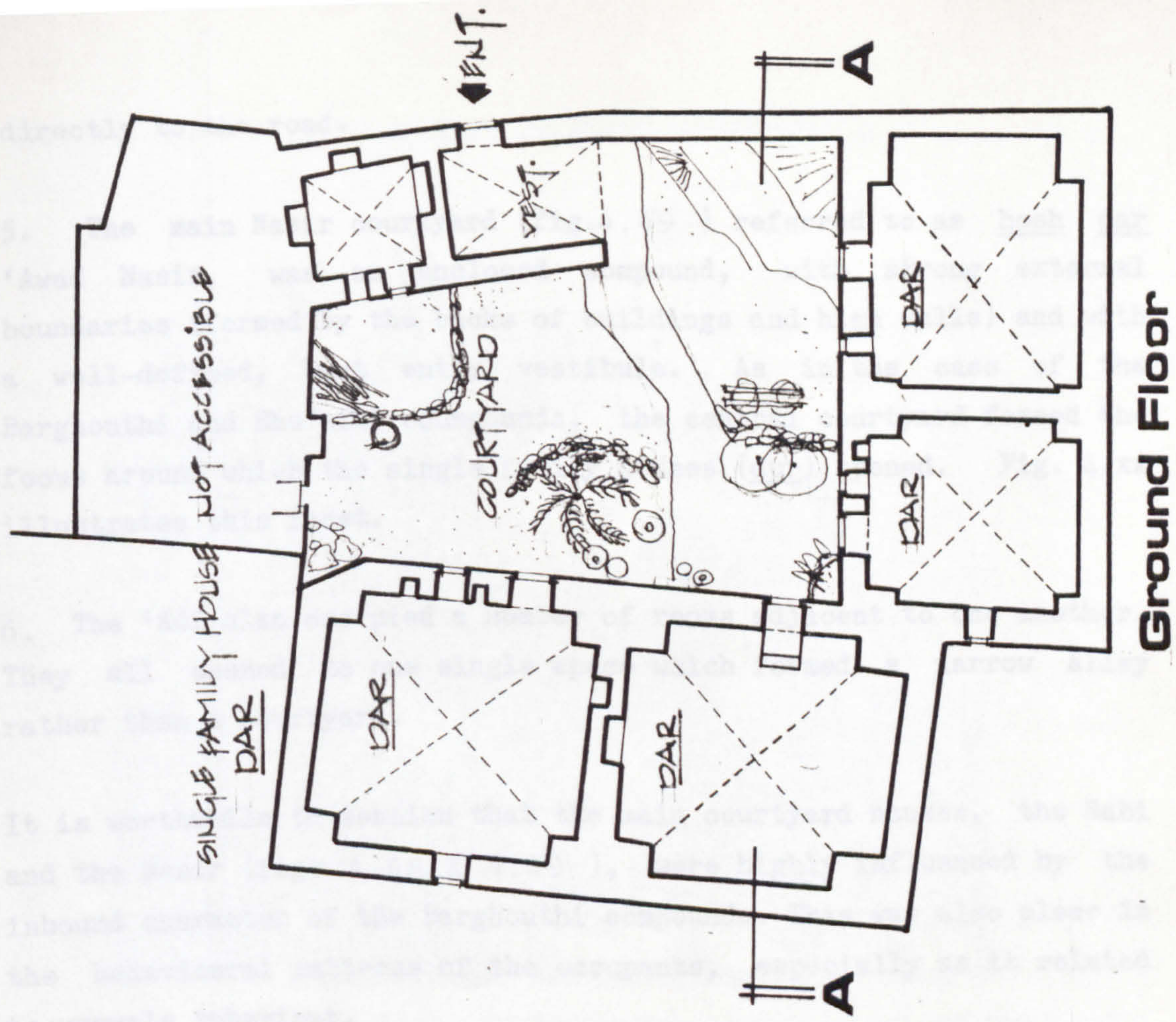
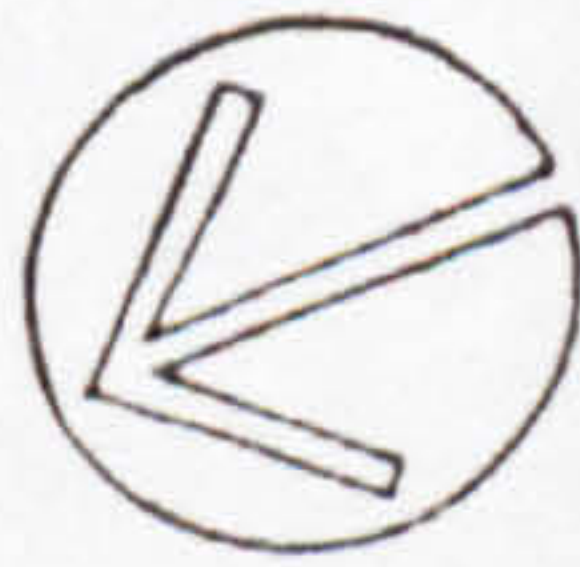
Section A A

Fig. 4.49

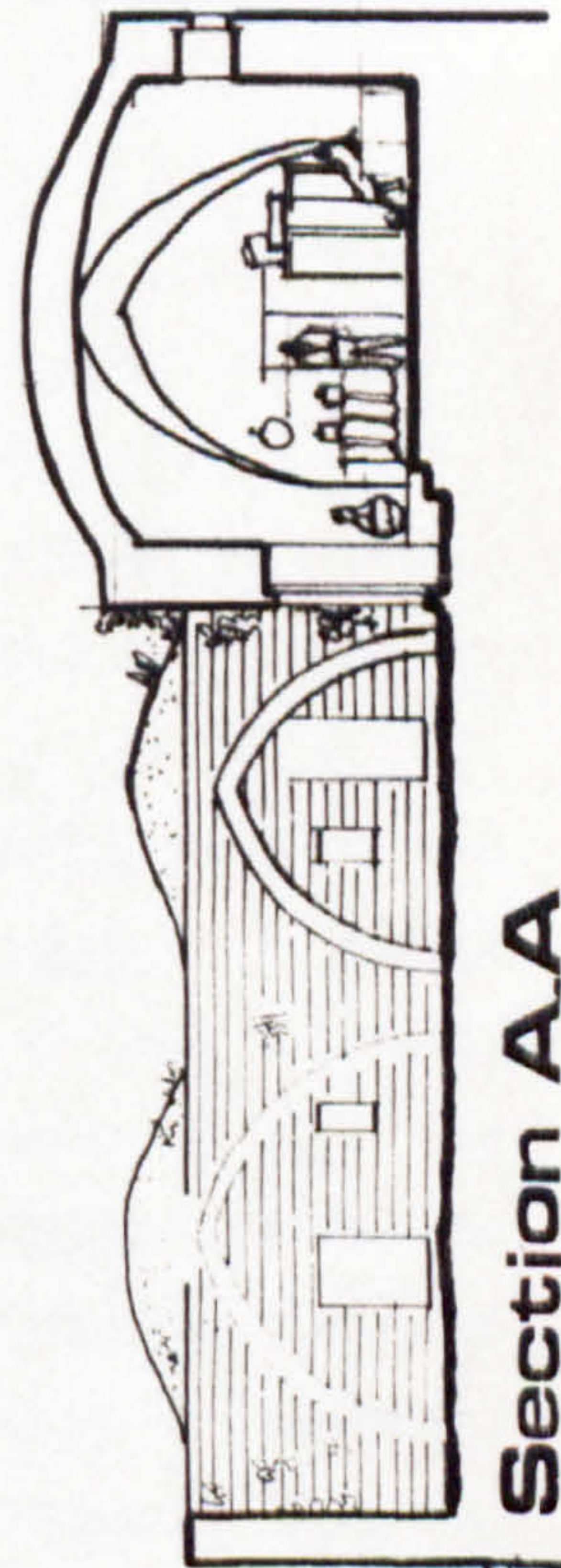
Deir Ghassaneh Dar Nasir

Surveyed 1986

scale:



Ground Floor



Section AA

directly to the road.

5. The main Nasir courtyard (fig.4.49) referred to as hosh dar 'Awad Nasir, was an enclosed compound, with strong external boundaries (formed by the backs of buildings and high walls) and with a well-defined, bent entry vestibule. As in the case of the Barghouthi and Shu'aibi compounds, the central courtyard formed the focus around which the single family houses (dur) opened. Fig. 4.xx illustrates this facet.

6. The 'Adi clan occupied a number of rooms adjacent to one another. They all opened to one single space which formed a narrow alley rather than a courtyard.

It is worthwhile to mention that the main courtyard houses, the Rabi and the Nasir (figs.4.48 & 4.49), were highly influenced by the inbound character of the Barghouthi compounds. This was also clear in the behavioural patterns of the occupants, especially as it related to women's behaviour.



Fig. 4.51: The construction of the peasant house was a communal act (taken from S.G.Brown, 1980)

"The chief festive events (farah) in the life of a Palestinian peasant or townman are three in number: marriage, the birth of male children and the acquisition of a new house" (Cana'an, 1933: 58).

The process of building a peasant house was an occasion in which almost every member of the community participated ('auneh). Though the construction of the house was seen as primarily a man's task, women and children also gave a helping hand, particularly in the construction of the cross-vaulted roof ('al-aqd). Most houses in Deir Ghassaneh were built with the help of a master builder (m'allem) who was brought from the neighbouring villages of Birzeit, Kefer ed-Deek, Beit-Rima and, most of all, from the town of Nablus, famed for its builders. The elaborate Barghouthi houses are believed to have been built with the help of master builders who came from the town of Nablus. (Abu Hani: Interview, 1984). The m'allem often came

with his working team: stone carriers, mortar carriers, stone dressers (dakkakin pl. dakkak), and stone builders (bannaih).

In simpler fallaheen houses, the m'allem came by himself and members of the houseowner's family helped him in the construction of the house. The poorer fallaheen houses (sagaif), which were made out of rubble stone and flat wood roofs, and field storage huts (ksour), were built by the fallaheen without the help of master builders (App.4.II).

In general the m'allem had practical knowledge, with little theoretical or aesthetic pretensions. The m'allem was not seen as the architect or artist who functioned as a "form maker". He was a person with technical knowledge who supervised the work, built the important parts of the building, such as windows, doors, arches and most important the cross-vault, (el-'aqd el 'arabi) or the dome (el-qubbeh). The form of the house, its interior divisions, and methods and materials for construction, were known to both the peasant owner and the builder. The site of the new house was also known, normally an extension of the already existing house. Usually the new house would be built for the married son, his wife and his children, when his father's house or compound became very crowded. The m'allem, who was brought to the site by the head of the family, enjoyed a great deal of prestige and respect. For the safety of the inhabitants of the new house and the completion of the house, all depended on him. "The work (lit. stroke) of the master-mason is worth a thousand liras even if he does it carelessly, while the work of the hireling deserves a slap" (daket el-ma'llem bi-alf walaw shalfaq shalfaga wdaket el-ajir bi kaf) (Cana'an, 1933: 4).

Gathering of Building Materials

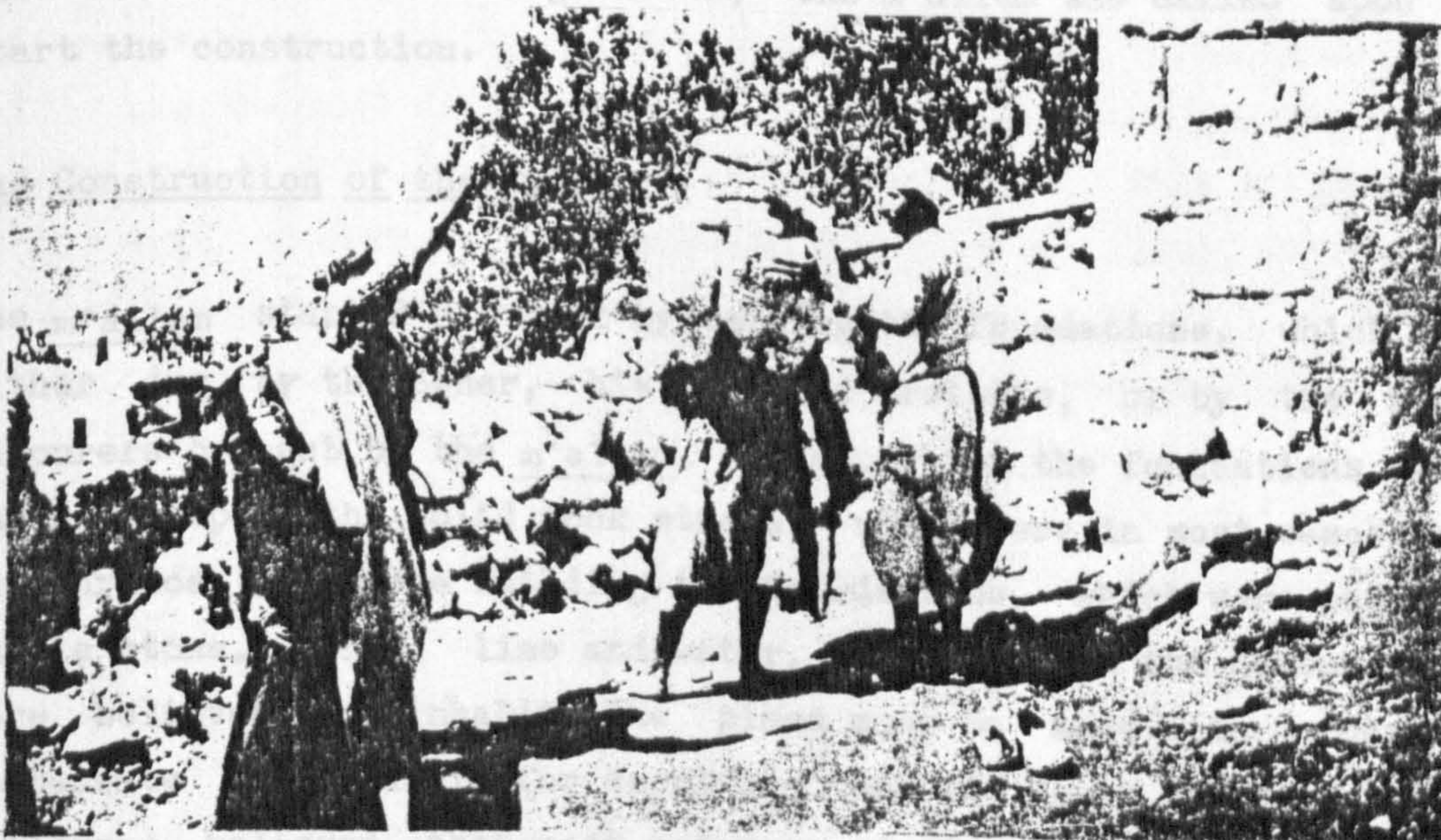
When building a house, the peasant had to collect the building materials - stone, rubble, gravel, sand or earth, lime, wood,- far in advance. The fallaheen of Deir Ghassaneh collected building-stone from the nearby quarry called el-Khawwas. Rough stones were carried to the site by camels or donkeys. Smaller stones were loaded on men's backs (Fig. 4.52). Rough stones were cut and worked on at the site by the peasant. In more elaborate houses like the Barghouthis, stones



Bringing water to mix the building mortar



Heating pitch for sealing the roof



Loading stones for the building site

Fig. 4.52: House building. Source: Seger (1981).

would be cut and dressed on site, with the help of a stone-dresser (dakkak). In general, simple peasants' houses were built of either rough undressed stones (hadjar ham) or of roughly dressed stones (tubzeh). Richer and more elaborate houses were built of coarsely dressed stones (taltish).

The fallah also had to collect rubble stone (djabish), gravel (srara) and earth (samakhah). Lime, which was used as a binding material, was either bought or more often made. The lime (shid) was made by burning soft lime stones (known as yahudi or miz) in air tight-kilns (latton) for 3-6 days and left to cool of in the kiln for another 3-6 days (Cana'an, 1932: 242 and Abu Hani, Interview: 1986).

A cistern (bir) had to be dug on site one year before the construction of the house in order to provide water needed during the construction of the house, and later to provide the inhabitants of the new house with water. In other cases, water was brought to the site from the village spring, either in metal kerosene tins or goat-skin containers (qirab) carried on donkeys.

Once all materials were gathered, the m'allem was called upon to start the construction.

The Construction of the House

The m'allem started his work by marking the foundations, which were either dug by the owner, his sons and brothers, or by the hired labourers brought by the m'allem. Trenches for the foundations were dug as deep as the solid rock strata, which were in most cases near the surface. Before building the foundations, which were made of rubble stone, earth, lime and water, offerings for the demons which were believed to inhabit the place must be made (in order to compensate the spirits for depriving them of their abode). The villagers believed that most underground places were inhabited by supernatural beings, the majority of which were malevolent. The offering was usually a lamb which was slaughtered and its blood let to run in the foundation trenches. Blood was believed to be the abode of the animal spirit. After the offering was made, the

construction of the foundation proceeded.

On the foundations, two stone walls were built. Under the outer wall, which was usually laid by the m'alle, an old silver coin or a green olive branch was laid while intoning "In the name of Allah". The white and green colours were considered heavenly colours. White is a good omen denoting light, while green is the lucky colour which brings prosperity.

After placating the malevolent spirits and assuring the blessing of God, the work proceeded. The outer wall, which was built out of regular stone courses was carefully constructed by the ma'alle. The inner wall, built out of rubble stones (nari) with irregular courses, was built by the peasant or the unskilled labourers brought by the m'alle. The space between the two walls was filled with rubble stone and lime water. The four corner pillars (rukab) which were to carry and withstand the truss of the cross-vault, were constructed simultaneously with the walls. The four walls were built with a pointed arch end. Windows and doors were carefully constructed by the m'alle.

The cross-vaulted roof (el-aqd) which covered the whole house (Fig. 4.53) was the most difficult part in the construction and hence was carefully and closely supervised by the m'alle. When building the roof, most members of the immediate and extended family as well as other villagers, gave a helping hand while singing joyfully. Men and young boys helped in passing water, mortar, and stone to those on the roof.

If the cross-vault was small in size (3 x 3 m), the formwork was made out of a pile of earth on which the light stones (hadjar nari) were stacked. Earth was removed once the vault settled and dried (Wilson, 1906: 58). However, in most cases, the size of the cross-vault was about six by seven meters, and hence a wooden formwork, which took the form of the cross-vault, was made. To bring prosperity to the inhabitants of the new house, an olive branch was nailed to this wooden frame. Over the frame, dry brush (sheeh), grass and mud were placed to shape the curves of the cross-vault.

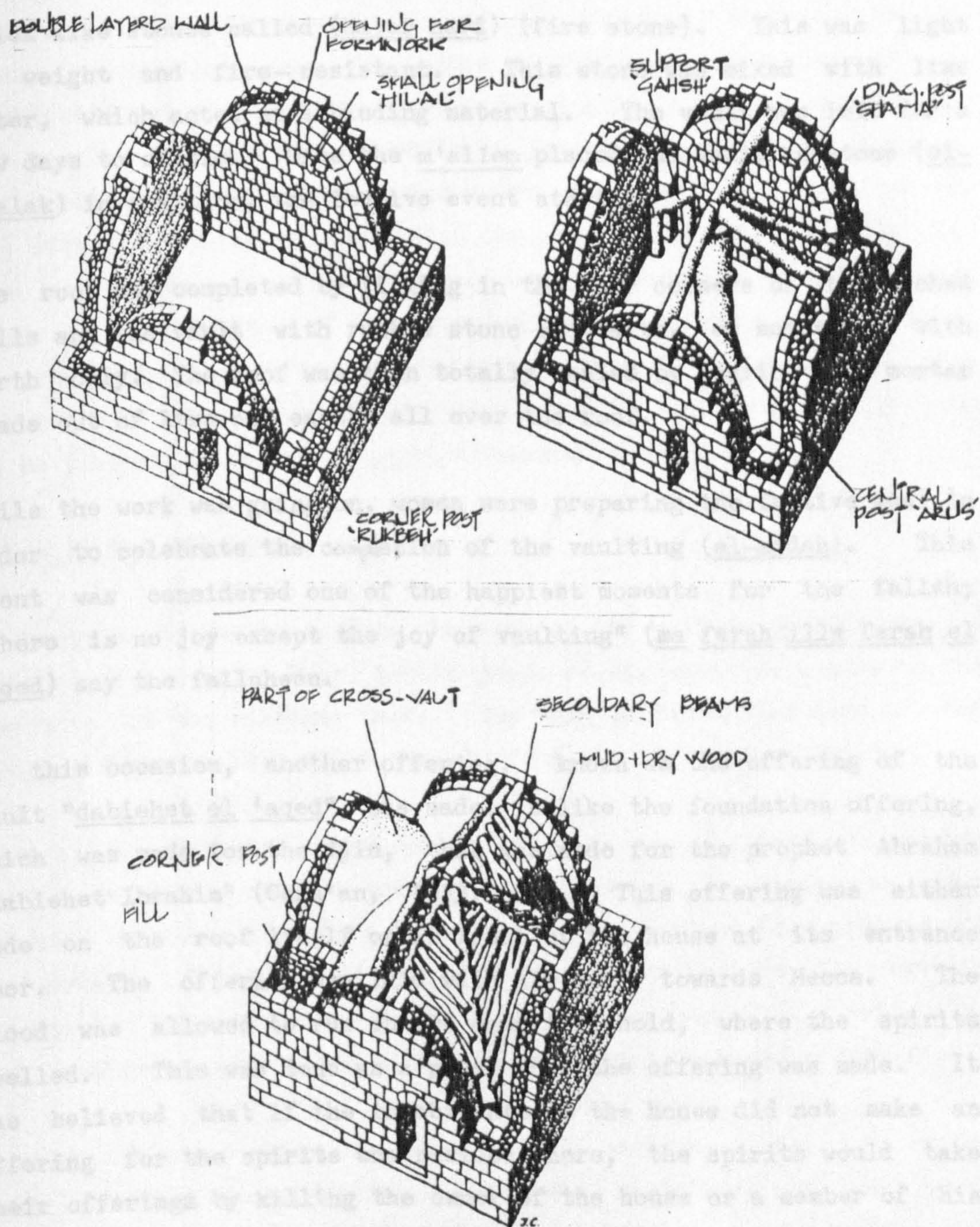


Fig. 4.53: Stages in the construction of the cross vault
 Drawn by J. Cejka. Source: A'amiry and Cejka (n.d.)

Once the mud was dry, it acted as a formwork for the roof. The bulk of the cross vault was made out of light stone, cut in an uneven brick like stones called (hajar nari) (fire stone). This was light in weight and fire-resistant. This stone was mixed with lime water, which acted as a binding material. The vault was left for a few days to settle. Once the m'allem placed the vault keystone (el-ghalak) in position, the festive event started.

The roof was completed by filling in the four corners of the arched walls and the vault with rubble stone and earth, or sometimes with earth only. The roof was then totally sealed by pouring the mortar (made out of lime and earth) all over the roof.

While the work was going on, women were preparing the festive meal in order to celebrate the completion of the vaulting (el-aqdeh). This event was considered one of the happiest moments for the fallah; "there is no joy except the joy of vaulting" (ma farah illa farah el 'aqed) say the fallaheen.

On this occasion, another offering, known as the offering of the vault "dabiehet el 'aqed", was made. Unlike the foundation offering, which was made for the djin, this was made for the prophet Abraham "dabiehet Ibrahim" (Cana'an, 1933: 64). This offering was either made on the roof itself or in front of the house at its entrance door. The offering was laid with its head towards Mecca. The blood was allowed to run on the door threshold, where the spirits dwelled. This was done as a proof that the offering was made. It was believed that if the inhabitants of the house did not make an offering for the spirits who resided there, the spirits would take their offerings by killing the owner of the house or a member of his family.

When the vaulting was finished, every one who helped, or even passed by, was invited to join the festive meal. The m'allem would usually receive a present, often a cloak ('abaieh), or a robe (qumbaz) for his valuable work. At the turn of this century, the m'allem was paid in cash; four to five majiedieh (one majiedieh was equivalent to one pound sterling) for building the house. Later on, in the 1920s, the

m'allem was paid one Palestinian lira per day (the equivalent of one pound sterling). People who helped in the construction did not receive gifts or payments but enjoyed the feast that went on for hours in the evening. The owners of the house and members of his family did not join in eating, but stood aside, helping and serving the people. Women, men and children joined in singing and clapping, celebrating the completion of the house (Fig.4.52). Before leaving the site, every one congratulated the proprietor and his family for the new house and wished them prosperity under the roof of the new house. Often members of the extended family would present the owner of the house with gifts (nqout) which were often new clothes. The owner and his family would thank every one for their help and promise to be present at the next 'auneh (communal help).

The Evil Eye (El-Hasad)

To protect the new house from the harm of the evil or envious eye, a blue stone, a horse shoe, garlic peels or egg shell were hung on the keystone of the entrance door. The name of God or the name of the Prophet Mohammad were often inscribed on the keystone of the door.

Before entering the new house by stepping over the door threshold, the name of God must be mentioned. Some people carried a green branch, preferably a olive branch, in their hand as they entered the new house. In a few cases, a sheikh was invited the first evening to recite the Quran in order to bless the new house. A white flag was sometimes stuck on the roof to bring good luck and prosperity.

Finally, the new house was also believed to bring either good or bad luck for its inhabitants. This was symbolized by the house threshold: "the threshold of this house has been good (or bad) for us" ('atabet el beit mniha 'aleina), goes the old saying of the fallaheen.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

The spatial organisation of the Barghouthi quarter and dwellings must be seen in the context of their social status, political and economic powers. First, in their dominant relationship to other clans sharing the same village; second, within a hierarchical social order in which the Barghouthi sub-clans shared the same living quarter; and third, as a semi-feudal rural group that had strong relations with urban notables and aspired to have an urban life-style.

Domination-Subordination

The Barghouthis, who were the tax farmers (multazimeen) of the Bani Zaid sheikhdom, set themselves apart from the rest of the village clans socially as well as spatially. The word fallaheen as we have seen earlier, became a derogatory term to describe non-Barghouthis (though the Barghouthis were themselves "fallaheen" in the wider sense).

The restrictions on Barghouthi-fallaheen inter-marriages, the exclusive visiting patterns, the differential status of land holdings, and the vertical forms of cropping arrangements, all reflected the dominant position of the Barghouthis and the subordination of the fallaheen.

Spatially, the Barghouthi-fallaheen relationship was expressed also in terms of dominance-subordination that can be indicated by the following:

1. The lofty location of the Barghouthi upper quarter overlooking other quarters in the village.
2. The village centre (sahet el-balad) which included the village guest-house, the mosque, and the sheikh's compound, was located in the Barghouthi quarter, emphasising their dominance over other village clans.

3. The Barghouthi quarter separated itself spatially from the rest of the village by creating a strong external boundary. Empty lots, wide alleys, backs of buildings, and high courtyard walls, all created a continuous edge around the quarter.
4. Access points leading to the Barghouthi quarter and compounds were well defined and restricted hence, controlling undesirable intruders.
5. The verticality of the tower-like Barghouthi mansions accentuated by the use of domes contrasted strongly with horizontally expanding, single floor fallaheen houses. The scale, the architectural articulation and decorations, the elaborate stone and wood works and the monumental entry doors of some of the Barghouthi mansions contrasted strongly with the simple fallaheen houses.

Internal Differentiation

The distinct social stratification in Deir Ghassaneh did not only exist between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen, but extended to the different Barghouthi sub-clans who were clearly of unequal status. This hierarchical order among the Barghouthis reflected itself in their built space at many levels:

1. In addition to having strong external boundaries that separated them from the rest of the village, the Barghouthis had strong internal boundaries separating the different Barghouthi sub-clans compounds from one another. Even though the different compounds in the same block may have had shared the same walls, the backs of buildings, the high and impermeable external walls, and the well-defined and restrictive entry doors, all succeeded in creating totally independent units.
2. The relationship between the location of the different Barghouthi compounds and the village centre (saha) reflected a ranked social order within the Barghouthi sub-clans. While the Daher compounds surrounded the village plaza, the Hussein and the Abu Khattab

compounds neighboured on the fellaheen quarters.

3. The Barghouthi dwellings, as illustrated earlier, had reflected a variety in their architectural forms: scale, size, architectural articulation, treatment of elevation, etc.--all depended on the owner's position in the social hierarchy. The Barghouthi dwellings ranged from the urban-looking Daher compounds, to the typical peasant forms of the Dawood family compounds. In spite of this seemingly limitless variety, invariant features of spatial organisation could be delineated; privacy, separation between women's domestic and men's outer world, separation between the different domestic households sharing the same courtyard, and to a lesser extent defense, were the underlying shared principles dictating the spatial organisation of the majority of the Barghouthi dwellings.

The Urban Nexus

As tax-farmers of the Bani Zaid sheikhdome, the Barghouthis had strong commercial ties with urban centres, particularly with the town of Nablus. In addition to political alliances with urban and rural notables such as the Rayyans and the Jayyousis, intermarriages occurred between the Barghouthis and notable families in other throne villages.

Such close relationships with urban centres and urban notables reflected itself in Barghouthi built-form in a variety of ways:

1. The most striking feature was their urban architectural forms. The scale of buildings, their size, the elaborate architectural details, the ornate fine stone and woodwork, and above all, their introverted spatial organisation, all recall urban structures.
2. The division of the Barghouthi dwellings into different domains varying in the degree of their privacy (for male, female, and parental domains) echoed not only urban forms but also urban life-styles. The aspirations to have an urban life-style was

clearly reflected in the semi-urban role given to most of the Barghouthi women. A role which confined them to the house.

3. Unlike the simple fallaheen houses, richer Barghouthi dwellings were stylized. They carried some architectural features which were typical of late Mamluk/early Turkish periods. Examples of these features were the striped pink and white stone courses (mushahhar), the interlocking voussoirs of the arched entry gate, the segmental arched door within a larger pointed arch. This stylized urban architecture is only to be expected when we realize that richer Barghouthi dwellings were built by master-builders who came from the town of Nablus, hence carrying with them building techniques and forms that prevailed there at the time.
4. The Barghouthi architecture (and throne village architecture in general) in line with their social and political power constituted a link between urban and rural communities in nineteenth century Palestine.
5. Finally, while the location of Deir Ghassaneh on top of the hill reminds us of the impregnable position that this throne village must have had, the tower-like Barghouthi dwellings acted also as defensive structures in the intermittent power struggles between the various Barghouthi sub-clans.

THE SHU'AIBI QUARTER AND DWELLINGS

Unlike the Barghouthis whose relationship to the rest of the village was one of dominance, the Shu'abis had more of a precarious position within the community. On the one hand they were part of a subordinate group (the fallaheen), but on the other hand they considered themselves to be, and were often seen by others as having a higher social status than that of the rest of the fallaheen. This is indicated by the fact that there were very few marriages between the Shu'aibis and the fallaheen of the lower quarter.

Again, in contrast with the Barghouthi sub-clans, the Shu'aibis formed a homogeneous cohesive group with little status differences amongst them.

The Shu'aibis who had a tacit alliance with the Daher-Barghouthi-sub-clan (as opposed to the alliances of the fallaheen of the lower quarter with the Dawood Barghouthi sub-clan), were highly influenced by the Barghouthi social mannerisms. This was reflected in the relative seclusion and strictness imposed on some Shu'aibi women (untypical of most peasant women).

This peculiar social status of the Shu'aibis could be seen in their built spaces at a number of levels:

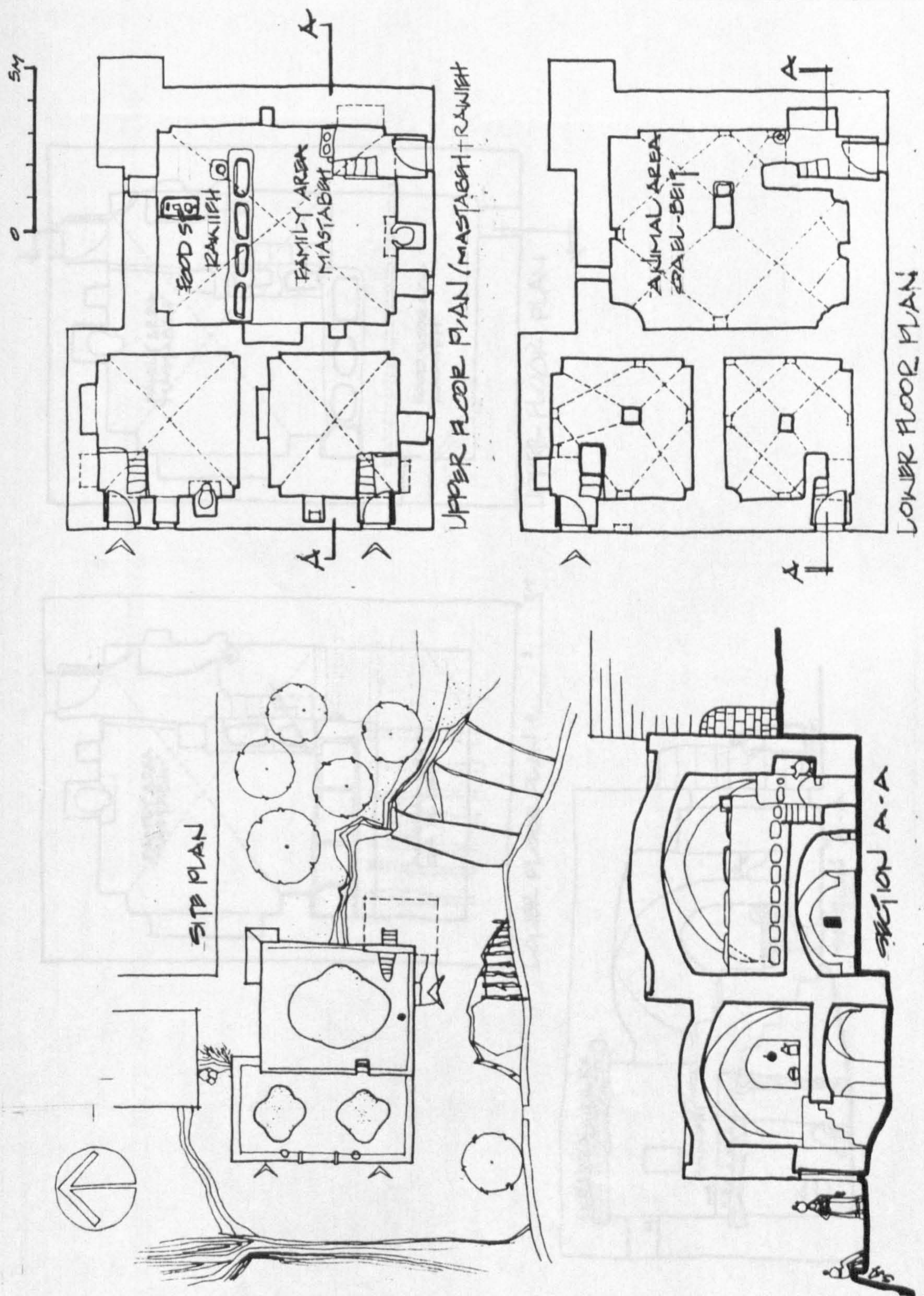
1. The Shu'aibi quarter was located below the Barghouthi quarter and away from the rest of the fallaheen lower quarter.
2. The well-defined entry points to the Shu'aibi quarter, the continuous edge formed by the backs of the Shu'aibi houses, the location of the olive press outside the harah proper, the direct entry to the Shu'aibi elevated room ('alieh), and the absence of through traffic, all reflected a cautious and formal relationship that the Shu'aibis had with rest of the village.
3. Unlike the Barghouthi quarter which consisted of a number of distinctly separated compounds, the Sh'aibi quarter consisted of a single large courtyard with weak internal boundaries allowing for easy interactions between the different Shu'aibi sub-clans.
4. While the Barghouthi compounds exemplified throne village architecture, the Shu'aibi simple houses were typical peasant houses found in the central highland villages. Eventhough the houses differed in their details, they were basically of the same theme.
5. The spatial organisation of the fallaheen houses were dictated by a number of principles:

A. A distinct division of labour based along gender lines accompanied with clear demarcations between men's public and women's private domain. The house was considered the private domain of the nuclear family, but more specifically the women's domain as opposed to the elevated room ('alieh) and the guest-houses which were considered the male's domain. The close and dark interior of the house contrasted strongly with the open and bright male's domain. The shifted position of the single entry door which provided for maximum privacy, and the elevated threshold, accentuated by the use of whitewash, clearly defined the boundaries of the two worlds.

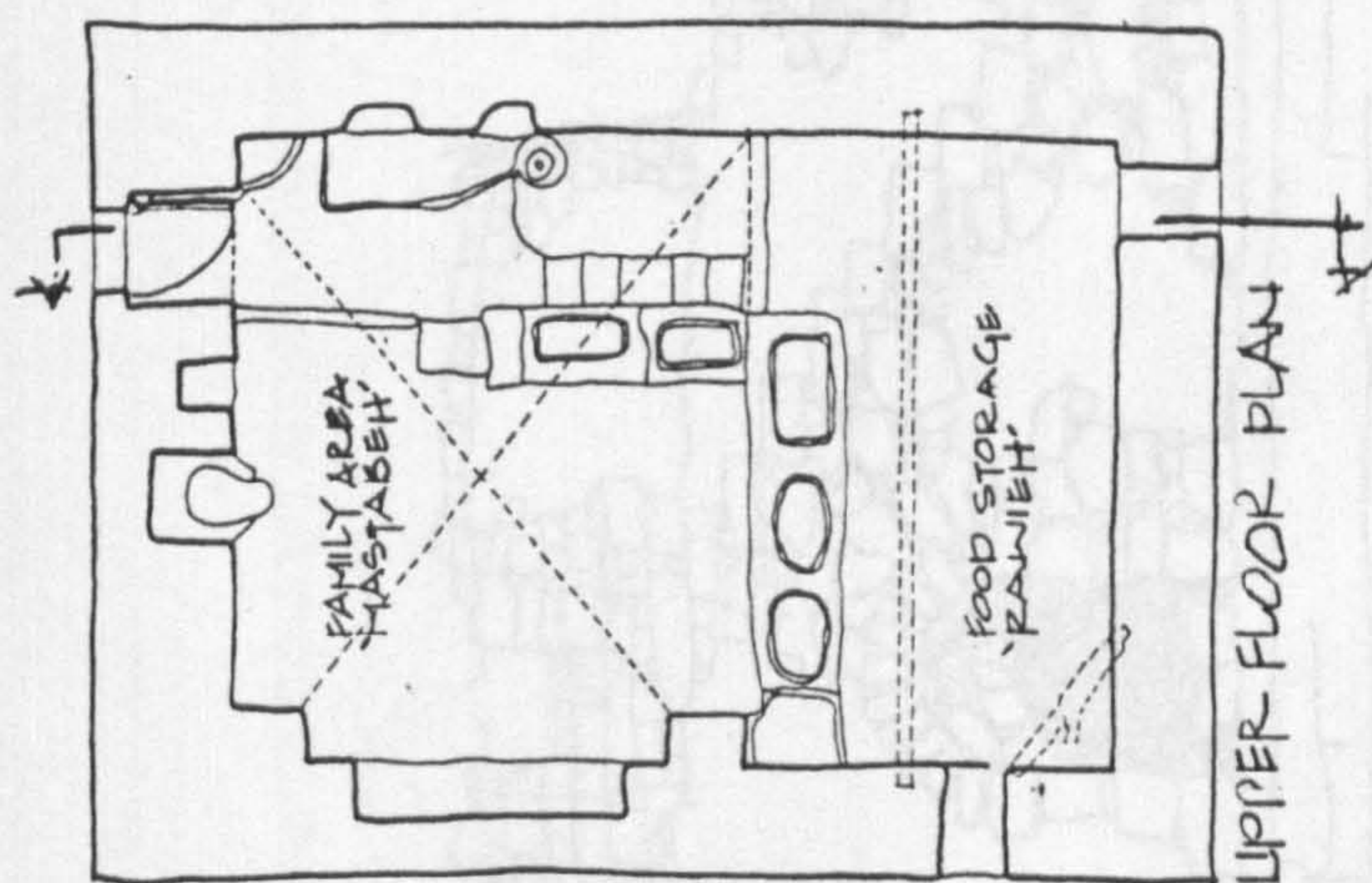
B. The fallah's dependency on, and close interaction with nature was also reflected in the internal organisation of the house. Man, animals and agricultural produce were placed under one roof with only one entrance. The hierarchical division of the house into the animal lower space (qa'a el- beit), middle living space (mastabeh), and upper agricultural space (rawieh) was symbolic of the various values assigned to these three elements.

C. The law of mahram (being in a degree of consanguinity precluding marriages) was the principle that dictated visiting patterns and sleeping arrangement. During festive occasions such as marriages, circumcisions, or births, the rituals proceedings took place in and around the house. Though such occasions tended to relax and sometimes obliterate restrictions observed against having non-mahram male enter the house, the inside of the house remained predominantly a female domain.

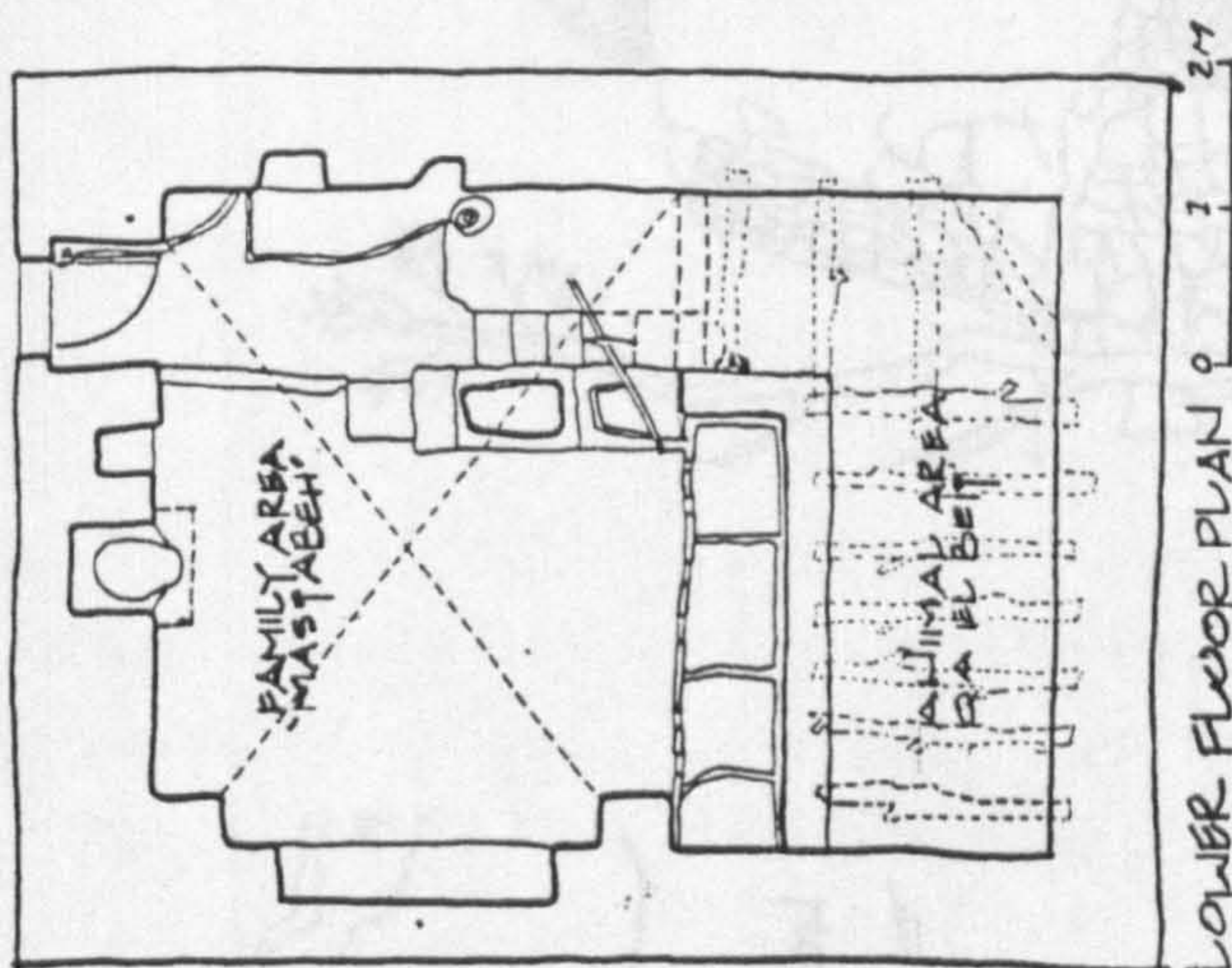
Appendix I: A typical peasant house from the neighbouring village of "Abwein



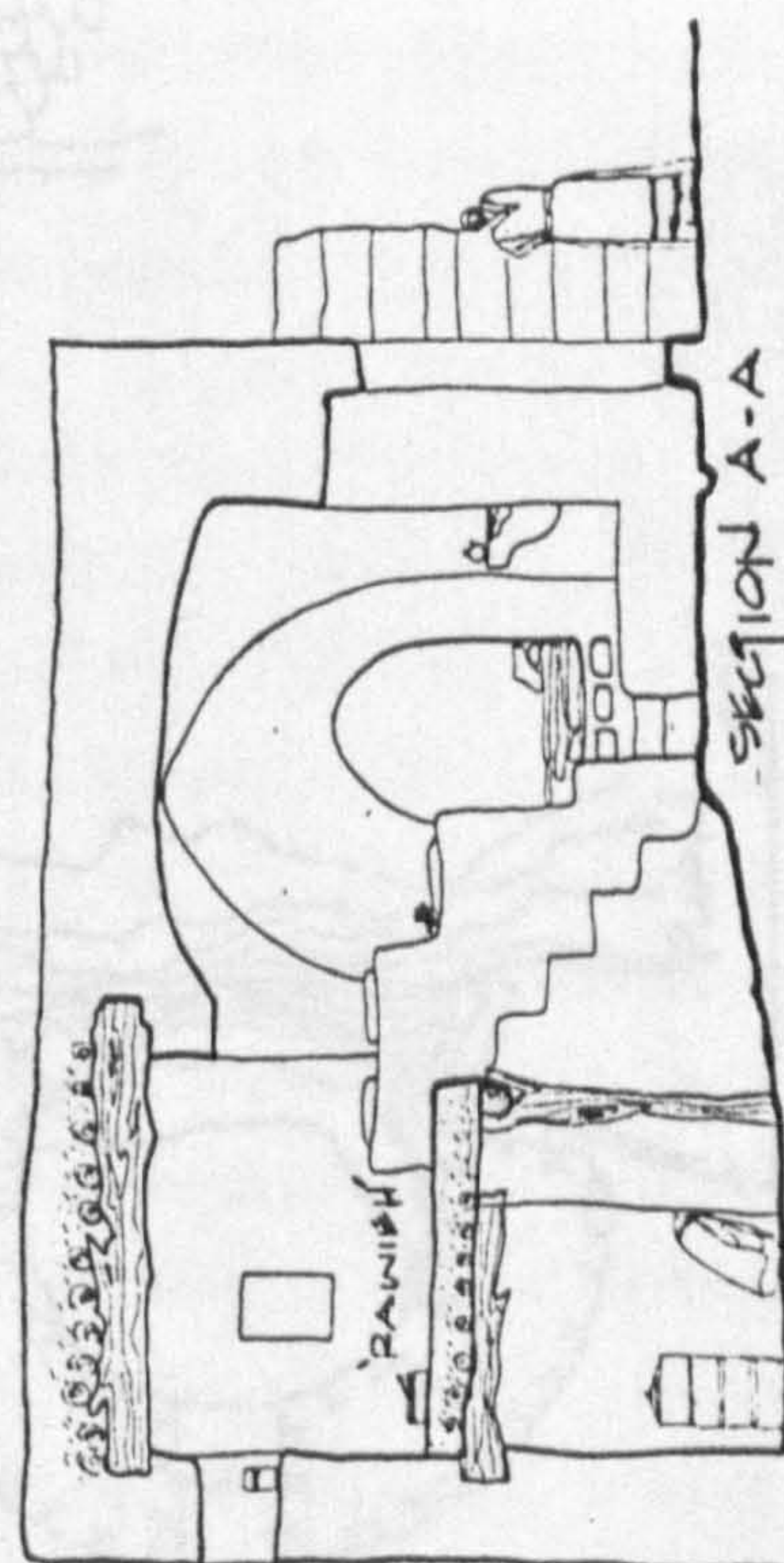
Appendix IIa: Poor peasant house (sqeifeh), from the village of 'Abwein



UPPER FLOOR PLAN

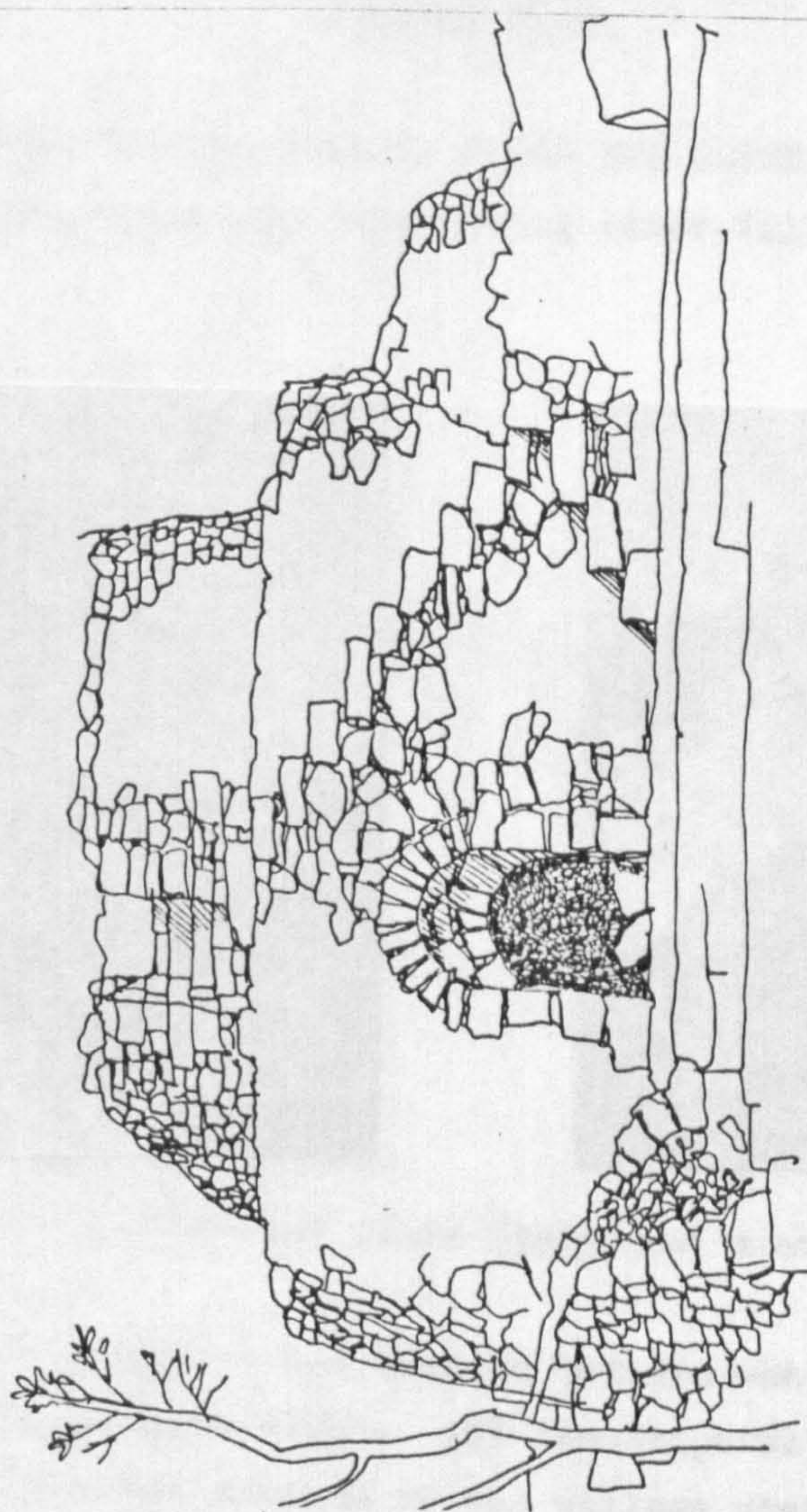
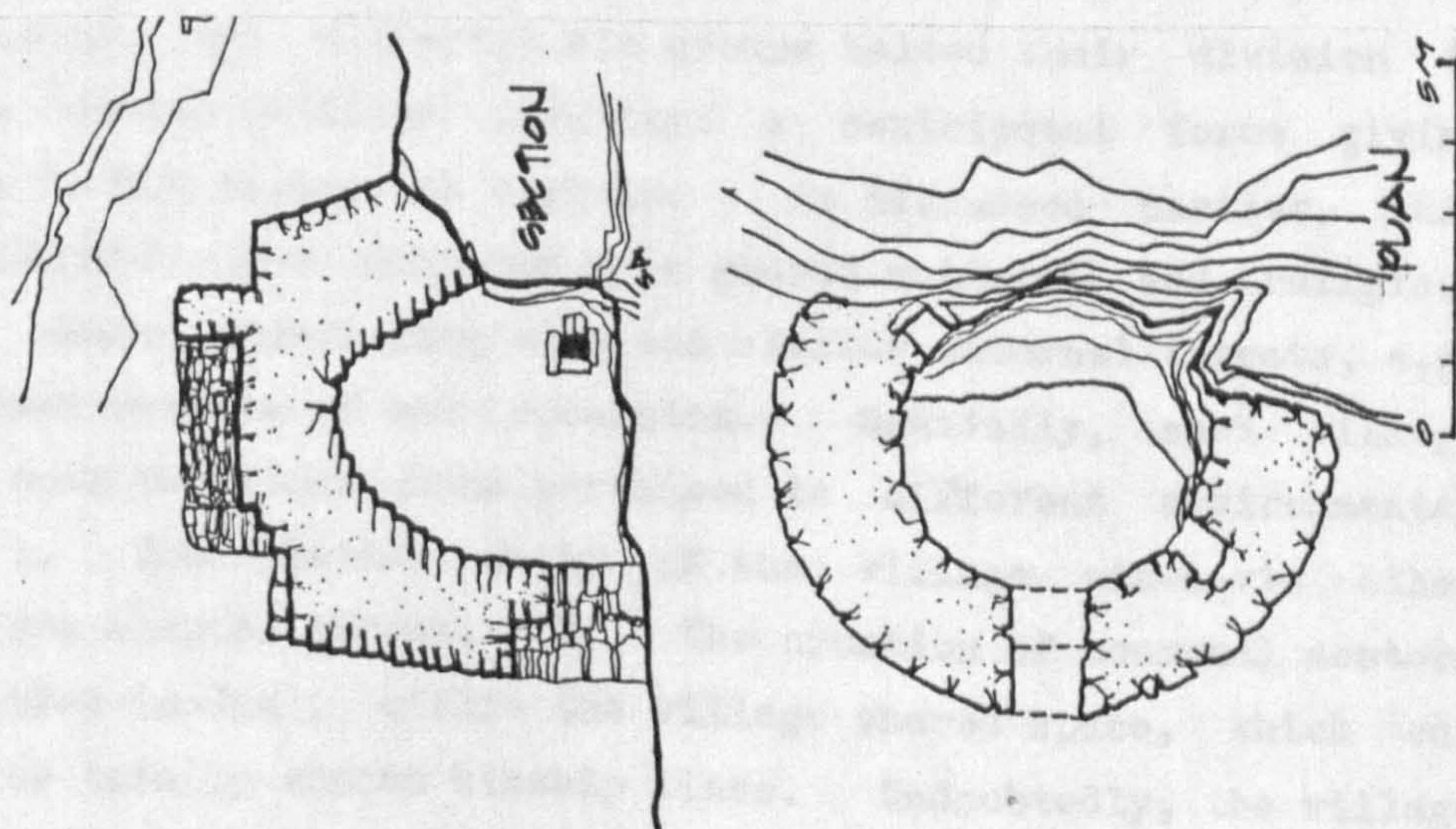


LOWER FLOOR PLAN



SECTION A-A

Appendix 4.IIb: Field storage hut (qasr), near the village of Mizra'a Sharqiyya



CHAPTER FIVE

THE VILLAGE COMMUNAL PLAZA AND GUEST-HOUSE: The Central Arena for Reinforcing Inter-Village Relations



Fig. 5.1: The village plaza (saha) and guest-house

Separation and unity, or the tension between what we might call, following Norberg-Schulz (1971: 46) "centripetal" and "centrifugal" forces constituted the essence of the village spatial organisation. At the level of the living quarters (harat), kinship acted as a "centrifugal" force which gave legitimacy to the breaking up of the village into its different clanship-based quarters. However, at the village level, the different kin groups halted their division to express a strong village identity; a centripetal force giving expression to the village as a whole. As discussed earlier, this village identity was enhanced by a shared cultural and religious heritage, shared common interests and similar external threats, e.g. the communal burdens of tax imposition. Spatially, such village identity took two forms which pertained to different environmental levels: 1. The spatial unity of the village vis-a-vis other villages (see chapter three). 2. The creation of communal centers of activities (nodes), within the village shared space, which cut partially or totally across kinship lines. Undoubtedly, the village communal plaza (es-saha el-'amumieh) and the village guest-house (el-

madafah) constituted the most important centre for collective male activities.

THE VILLAGE PLAZA AND GUEST-HOUSE

Up to 1923, when different clans established their own guest-houses, the village plaza (es-saha el-amumieh) constituted the centre of the village. This exclusively male-dominated place not only physically "gathered" the different parts of the village around it, but also gathered a multiplicity of meanings. "The meaning of any object consists in its relationship to other objects, that is, it consists in what the object "gathers" (Norberg-Schulz, 1979: 166). The saha gathered around it the village's most distinct and meaningful structures: the village guest-house, the village mosque and the sheikh's compound. This gave the saha its important social, ritual and political meanings.

The saha was in this case, geographically on top of the most elevated area in the village. Its location in the middle of the Barghouthi quarter not only made it the centre of this quarter, but also the centre of the village as a whole. Thus the hegemony of the Barghouthis was reflected in the centrality of the saha as a unifying arena for the other village clans under Barghouthi patronage. The physical distance between the saha and each subclan's living quarters corresponded with a social distance.

The saha could be seen as a stage on which an important part of the village social and political life was played out. In the saha, the village came closest to acting as one social and political unit. It represented the symbol of prestige for Deir Ghassaneh as a whole in relation to other villages. It was the framework of both political rivalry and social differentiation. It varied its function according to need. Together the saha and the guest-house, located to the east, fulfilled a combination of social functions: as the communal place for social interactions, as an enclosure where religious rituals, weddings, and other public celebrations took place. It also acted as a coffee-house, and as an entertainment

centre. The saha together with the guest-house varied in functions from the village courthouse, thus playing an important role in social control, to the marketplace for passing peddlers. The guest-house lodged passing travellers and housed village visitors and government officials.

An Introverted Enclosure

The saha as figure 5.1 illustrates, had a strong visual impact, which certainly matched its functional importance. It acquired a unique and distinct spatial character by being strongly dissimilar to its surroundings. This spacious place contrasted sharply with the densely clustered compounds around it. The scale of the saha, dictated partly by the surrounding Barghouthi houses, contrasted strongly with that of the fallaheen houses. The saha was contained by the village mosque to the north, the Daher houses to the west and the south, and the guest-house from the east (Fig. 5.2). The buildings formed a circumscribed geometric form. This geometrized form of its plan gave a sharp sense of limits and enhanced the sense of enclosure. The edges of the surrounding buildings operated as a boundary which limited the place and at the same time created a clear distinction between what was inside and what was outside. From the south, the surface of the Barghouthi houses created a stronger and more continuous boundary than that of the north. While the southern boundary separated the saha, the male public domain, from the private domain of women behind, the northern boundary integrated the mosque space within the saha. The similar architectural articulation, same mass-void relation, same distribution of openings [no longer the case], the use of the same building material - pink and white stones - and the same type of roofs (domes) added to the continuity of the southern boundary.

The clustering and concentration of masses - buildings - not only defined the saha's limits, but also defined its relation to its surrounding through its definition of access points. The three access points to the saha have been discussed earlier (Barghouthi quarter, chapter 4). The formal entry, located to the east, was considered the main entry point. The architectural treatment of

this vestibule, which was located below the guest-house, gave the strongest sense of arrival. Undoubtedly, the saha was the most important point of reference for all villagers- particularly men. It was, in Lynch's terminology, the point of "departure" and of "arrival". The saha also gave a strong sense of containment with no, or very little, directional sense. Internally, the saha was differentiated into zones. This facilitated the simultaneous presence of several activities. The area outside the guest-house was considered an extension of it and was used for communal gatherings and festive occasions. On such occasions, this zone extended to include all the plaza. The area next to the sheikh's house was considered as an extension of the semi-public male domain. And the area outside the mosque was considered an extension of the mosque, where men normally gathered before and after prayer time. The south-western corner of the saha was the area where younger men gathered, away from elderly men in the guest-house [later this corner became the Daher's guest-house]. Foot paths marked the boundaries between these differentiated sub-zones. These subdivisions were accentuated by the different architectural articulation, such as the pergulas which were erected outside the guest-house (no longer there) and the presence of two big trees which gathered people around them.

THE VILLAGE GUEST-HOUSE: General Description

The words madafah 'amumiyyeh, the common guest-house, and sahet el-balad, the village plaza, were used interchangeably to refer to the same place. Both the plaza and building were referred to as the madafah or saha. [To distinguish between the two, I use the term madafah for the building and the saha for the open space]. This is not surprising when one realizes the close structural and functional relationship that existed between the two. The one important difference, discussed at length later, was that while patterns of hierarchical orders were distinct in the madafah, they tended to fade away in the saha.

The guest-house constituted part of the east boundary delimiting

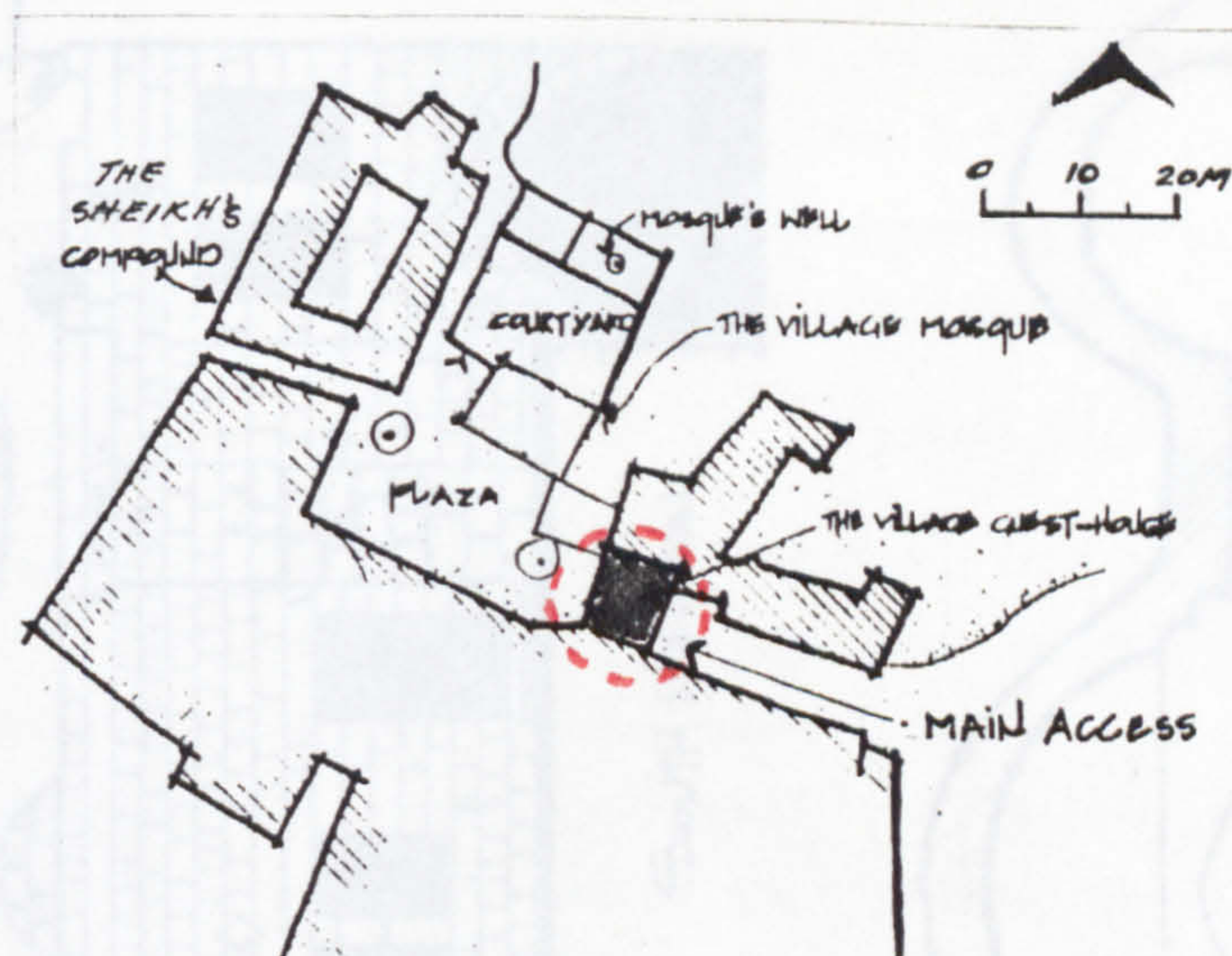
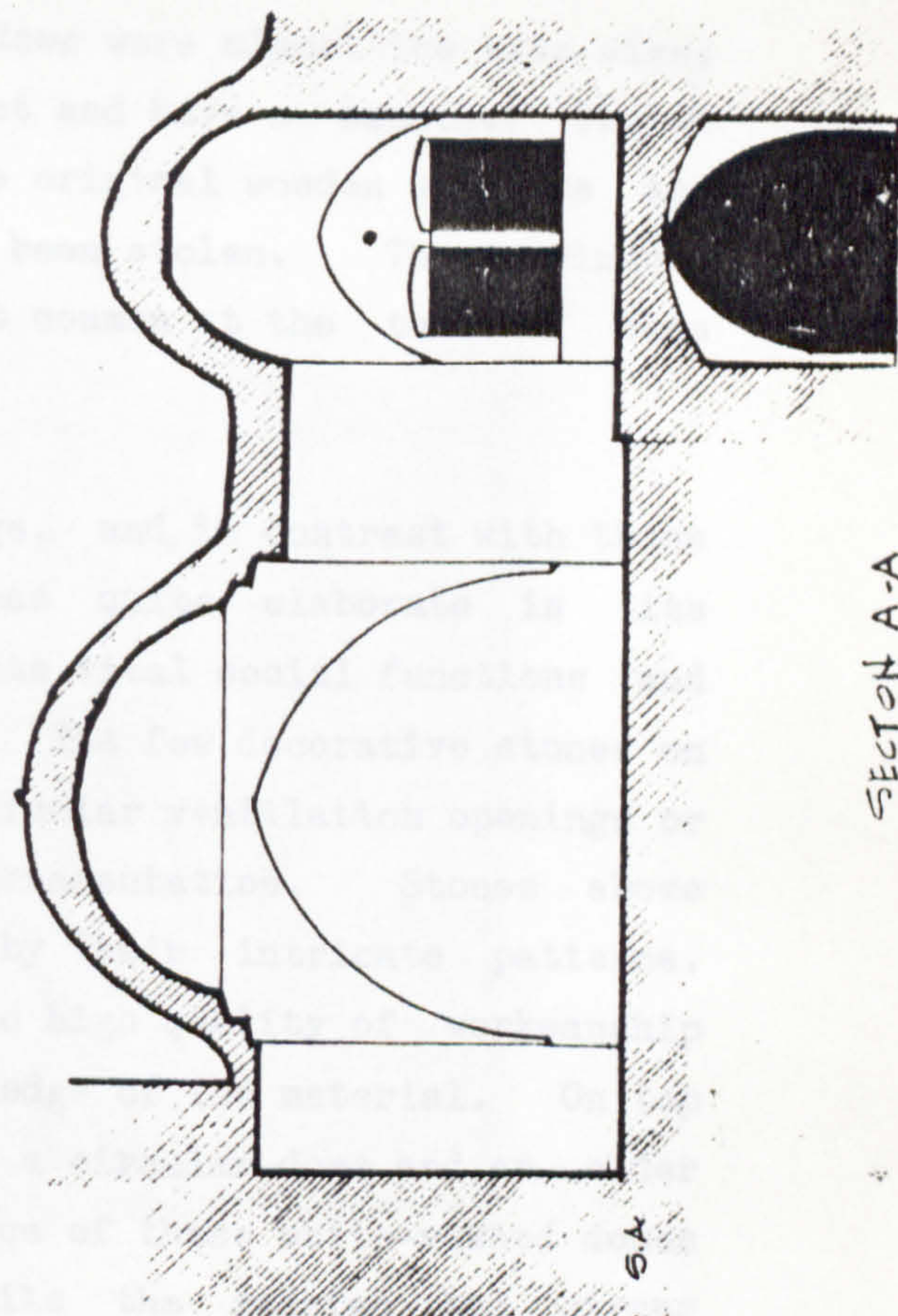
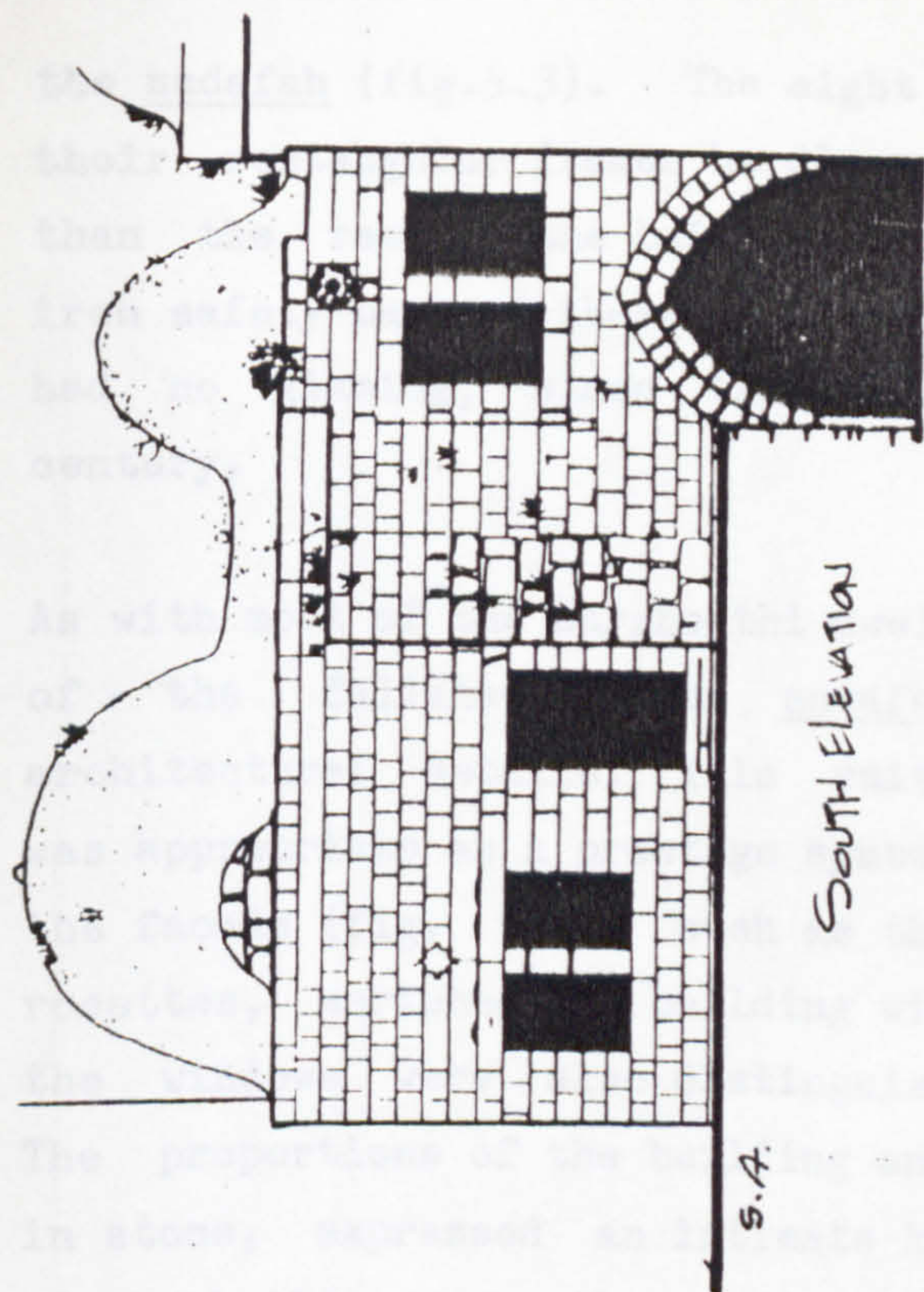
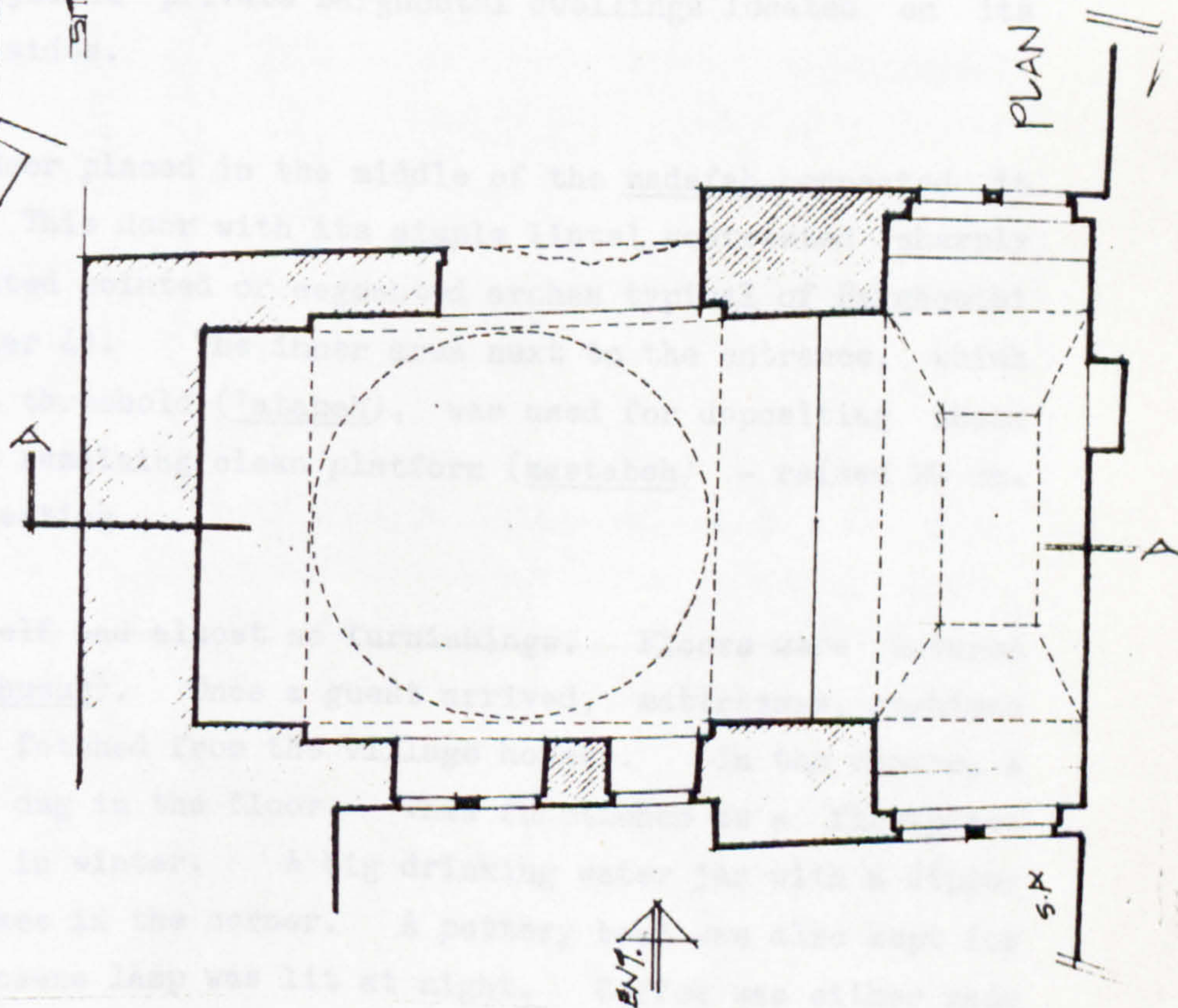
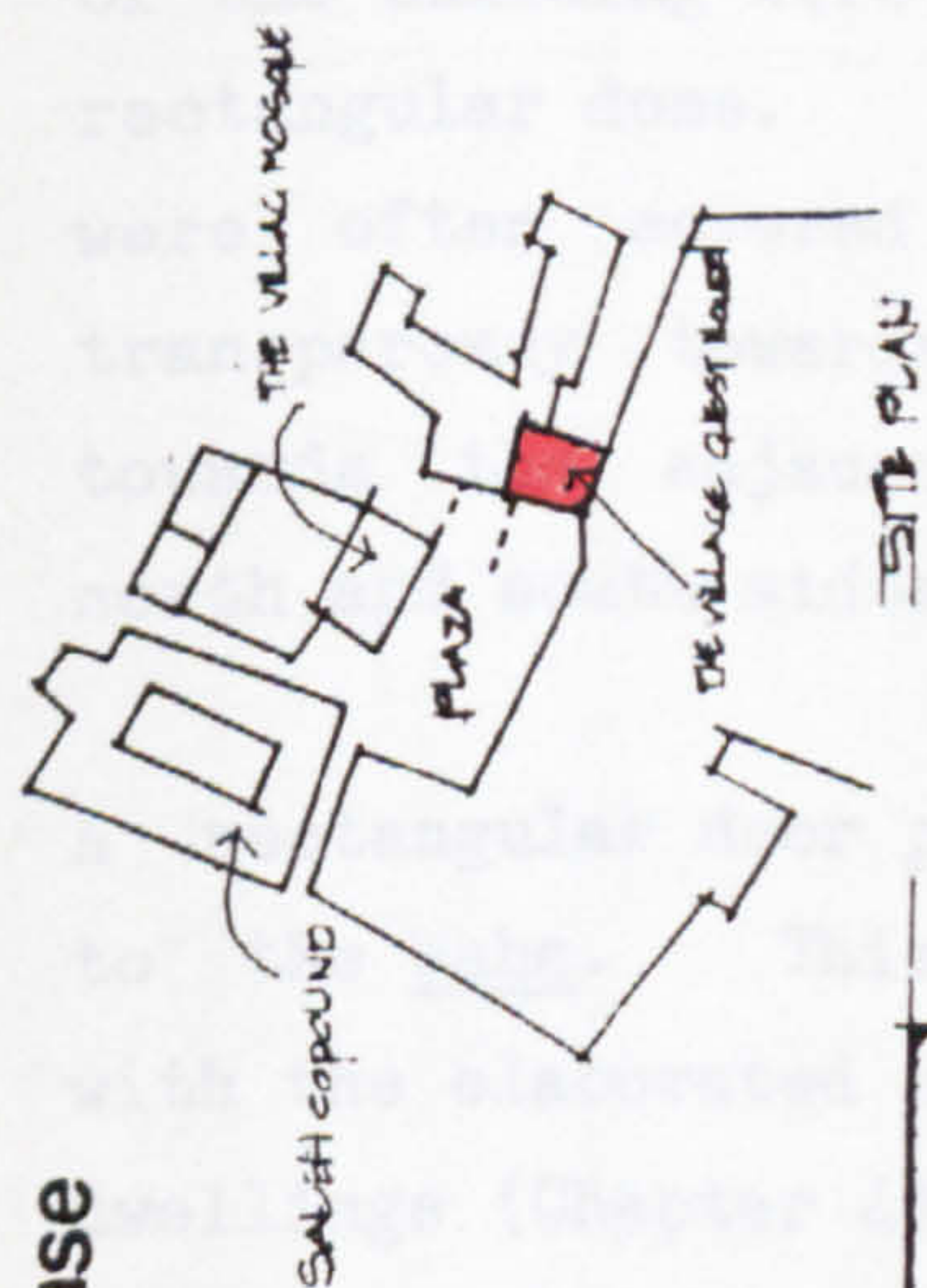


Fig. 5.2: Location of village guest-house

the saha. The only access to the madafah was from the saha (fig. 5.3). In front of the madafah was one of the only two trees planted in the saha. There also used to be a number of pergolas covered with grape vines. Under these, several strawmats were spread on which men sat. The area in front of the madafah was used whenever the weather allowed, and particularly on festive occasions. The madafah, which consisted of one big room, was constructed in two stages. The older part to the south was built around 1830 [this date was estimated by Abu-Hani, for I could not find any material evidence]. This part was one step higher than the new extension to the north which was built seventy years later. Both spaces were roofed by domes. The older part had a square dome, while the newer extension had a round dome. The dome signified the importance of the building, for only holy shrines, or buildings of some significance were roofed by domes - as opposed to cross-vaults, barrel vaults and flat wooden roofs.

In contrast to the small windows which characterized most village dwellings (women's domain), this male domain had eight big windows, hence making it possible to see whatever was happening around it. This also enhanced the close functional relation between the madafah and the saha. Western windows overlooked the saha, while those to the east overlooked the entrance to the saha, located below part of

Fig. 5.3
Deir-Ghassaneh Guest-House
Surveyed 1985.
scale: 0 1 2M



the madafah (fig.5.3). The eight windows were almost the same size; their rectangular frames hardly project and have a smoother finish than the rest of the building. The original wooden shutters and iron safety bars of these windows have been stolen. These windows had no glazing, since this was not common at the turn of this century.

As with most of the Barghouthi dwellings, and in contrast with those of the fallaheen, the madafah was quite elaborate in its architectural details. This suited its vital social functions and was appropriate as a prestige symbol. The few decorative stones on the facade (fig. 5.7), such as the circular ventilation openings or rosettes, enriched the building with ornamentation. Stones above the windows were also distinguished by their intricate patterns. The proportions of the building and the high quality of workmanship in stone, expressed an intimate knowledge of the material. On top of the building were the projections of a circular dome and an older rectangular dome. The external surface of these white-washed domes were often covered with plants. While the madafah had strong transparency towards the east and west, there were no openings towards the adjacent private Barghouthi dwellings located on its north and south sides.

A rectangular door placed in the middle of the madafah connected it to the saha. This door with its simple lintel contrasted sharply with the elaborated pointed or segmented arches typical of Barghouthi dwellings (Chapter 4). The inner area next to the entrance, which had a high stone threshold ('atabeh), was used for depositing shoes and tools. The remaining clean platform (mastabeh) - raised 20 cm. - was used for seating.

The madafah itself had almost no furnishings. Floors were covered with strawmats (husur). Once a guest arrived, mattresses, cushions and pillows were fetched from the village houses. In the centre, a pit (nuqrah) was dug in the floor. This functioned as a fire-place providing warmth in winter. A big drinking water jar with a dipper (miskah) was placed in the corner. A pottery bowl was also kept for washing. A kerosene lamp was lit at night. Coffee was either made



Fig. 5.4: Village guest-house (madafah)

in the madafah or in a small room outside. It was roasted in a large shallow iron spoon (mikhmas), then put into a mortar (mehbash) made out of wood and pounded with a wooden pestle. Once ground, the coffee was poured into a deep brass or iron pot with cold water and put on the fire to boil a few times. When ready, the coffee-maker went around and served it in china cups. (For a detailed description of the coffee set see El-Barghouthi, 1924: 180)

The guest-house was maintained by a special caretaker (natour). He was one of the villagers, hired by the village as a whole, and paid in kind annually by each member of the village. The caretaker's duty was to keep the place clean, fill the water jars, light the lamp etc. He also prepared the coffee and kept it ready for every newcomer. But his main duty was to look after the needs of the guests by fetching mattresses and pillows, by serving them food and coffee, and also by looking after their horses which were kept outside in the saha.

Power Relations and the Number and Location of the Guest-Houses

In nearly every Palestinian village there was at least one guest-house. The number of guest-houses was influenced by the number of clans in a village, their size and affluence. Whether there was one or more guest-houses was dictated by whether there was one hegemonic clan or several powerful ones. In the case of Deir Ghassaneh until the 1920's, there was only one guest-house, located in the Barghouthi quarter, and in the middle of the Daher compounds. The placing of this single guest-house in relation to its surroundings revealed the hierarchical social order which prevailed in Deir Ghassaneh. The fact that the Daher guest-house was considered the common madafah reflected the power and authority which that family enjoyed over other families. Whereas in some villages the guest-house was a room in the sheikh's house or, as in smaller villages and hamlets, the village mosque was used as a guest-house, in Deir Ghassaneh, the guest-house was a separate building distinguished by its size and scale. Men from all the Barghouthi sub-clans, the Shu'aibi, the 'Alem and the lower quarter, came to the guest-house and considered it their common madafah.



Fig. 5.5: The Shu'aibi and Cana'an private reception rooms ('alali)

The different clans had their own private reception room located in their own quarters. These were referred to as 'alali (elevated rooms), and were used by the clans for their own personal and family guests only (Fig. 5.5). In times of tension and dispute between the

different clans (mostly among the Barghouthis), men in opposition to the Daher clan would boycott the main guest-house and retreat to their own private reception rooms. Thus, by not using the main guest-house, men expressed their anger and dissatisfaction. They normally refused to go back until problems were resolved. Their presence was crucial in strengthening the sheikh's power, as well as the relations between men of the different clans, whereas their absence made the coordination of the village affairs very difficult and undermined the sheikh's power.

The Multiplicity of Functions Served by the Guest-House

The functions of the guest-house differed according to the time of the day, or the nature of the village ceremonies. During the day, it functioned more or less as an administrative office where the village council of elders - composed of four to five elders from each clan - met with the village sheikh. In the early mornings, elderly men would come to the guest-house, carrying with them a small amount of coffee (called a "handful of coffee"), a few sticks for the fire, and their breakfast (a piece of bread and a few olives). Each elder put the coffee in a bag hung on the wall and seated himself. He was then offered some hot coffee by the guest-house guardian, and he would drink it while having a conversation with the other men sitting near him. Then those who were still young enough to work would leave for their fields, while the older men stayed behind to discuss village affairs and matters of common interest. The sheikh and his council of elders would spend most of the day in the guest-house receiving official guests and taking care of their visitors.

The guest-house also functioned as the village courthouse. Disputes between the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh were presented before the sheikh. In other villages sheikhs from neighbouring villages could be asked to settle disputes in the village. Since the sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh was the district sheikh, this was not the practice in this village. The sheikh and his council of elders had the power to force any villager to appear before the court. Each person would stand in front of the judge and state his case, then sit

down. After listening to all that had to be said the judge stated his judgement which was binding on both sides. (For a detailed description of fallaheen jurisprudence see Finn (1923: 21-24). However, in the evenings, the guest-house had a social function. It was a place of relaxation where men met to enjoy the evenings after a long day of hard work. The absence of social interaction among men in their homes was compensated for by their evening gatherings in the guest-house. They would sit together, or in smaller groups, talking to one another, or all listening to someone telling stories. Sometime the village poets recited poems (zajal) to fit the occasion. Songs of many kinds were also sung by the village singer playing a rababah (a one-stringed fiddle).

In Peasant Life in the Holy Land Wilson describes peasant men meeting in the guest-house at the turn of the century:

"It is a picturesque sight which these guest-rooms present at night, with a crowd of swarthy men seated on the ground in various easy attitudes around the central hearth, on which burns a fire of twigs, the bright blaze lighting up their weather-beaten faces and bringing into sharp relief the white beards of old men. The long pipes are filled and lit, and their smoke mingles with that of the fire. There is the hum of conversation all round or else breathless silence while someone tells a thrilling tale of adventure, robbery, or war: or an animated discussion takes place over some matter of keen local interest" (Wilson, 1906: 278).

Baldensberger also comments:

"The long winter evenings are spent in games or story telling; but the Fallaheen are most fond of the long adventures of the warrior tribes in their migrations from Arabia, attacks from other tribes, love-romances or semi-biblical, semi-Mohammedanized stories about 'Joseph and his brethern' (Baldensberger, 1913: 125),

In his unpublished manuscript, Omar Salih El-Barghouthi states that men from the Barghouthi clan never participated in singing or dancing because they considered this act to be improper and only to be performed by the fallaheen.

Sometimes a religious sheikh who recited parts of the Koran would

come to the guest-house during the evenings. The arrival of gypsy groups (en-nawar) gave the guest-house a festive atmosphere. They spent a few days around the village, where they erected their tents and came to the guest-house at night. Both men and women gypsies sang and danced, creating a pleasant lively atmosphere. As long as the gypsies were in the village, men would stay late at the guest-house and would go home late to sleep and get some rest before an early start the next morning.

The Ceremonial Functions of the Guest-House

The guest-house was also the communal place where all village ceremonies took place or culminated. During the month of Ramadan, a few minutes before sunset each man fasting would come with his sons to the guest-house, carrying their cooked food, and sit down with his grown up sons around him waiting to hear the prayer (m'uathen). At that moment they would start to eat with the rest of the men their communal meal. Afterwards they were offered coffee. Then together they prayed the



Fig. 5.6 : Men shared their communal meal during the month of Ramadan
Source: Graham-Brown (1980)

evening prayer, relaxed, and later moved to the mosque to pray the night prayer led by the Imam. Afterwards they would go back to the guest-house where they would stay up quite late and then go back home where they would eat their suhur (late night meal) and sleep until late the next day.

On the first day of the two Moslem annual feasts (al-fitr and al-adha), the men of the village dressed in the morning, went to the mosque and then to the cemetery. Then they assembled at the guest-

house, exchanging greetings. The sheikh offered them coffee and sweets then they left to spend the day with their families. Meanwhile villagers from neighbouring villages would come to give their greetings on this festive occasion, then go back on the same day.

The guest-house was also used as a gathering place during ceremonies. In the afternoon of a wedding, after having lunch at the bridegroom's house, all the village men assembled in the saha bringing the groom on horseback. Gathered in the saha, they sang and danced until the evening, when the groom was taken back home. Most men stayed behind, dancing in the saha.

When a man died, the village men went to the mosque to pray, and carried the body to the cemetery. After burying the dead, the men came back to the guest-house where they drank coffee together and later on were served lunch or dinner by one of the families related to the deceased.

Thus, the village guest-house was the physical arena where the males of the village as a whole shared festive and sorrowful occasions alike. The guest-house was the unifying centre which strengthened inter-kin bonds.

The Absence of Women

In the guest-house, women were conceptually as well as physically excluded. Through this "male forum", men controlled village events. Women did not directly participate in public matters, political discussions and decision making. Public matters were seen strictly as men's responsibility - usually the elders'.

However, this male control of public political activity and the physical seclusion of women did not entirely exclude the influence of women. In practice, they participated indirectly while moving about in the village during the day. Women gathered information and expressed their views on current issues, while filling their jars

from the village spring, or by talking to their husbands, brothers and sons when they met at home. Hence they contributed to the political process and decision making, even though they were physically absent from the guest-house.

While men met in the evenings at the guest-house, women were in their own domains: their houses and courtyards. They sat around with their female peers chatting, while preparing food for their menfolk and their visitors.

The two separate domains, were actually in continuous but indirect contact through the movements of close male kin. Normally, the host's son or brother moved between the house and the guest-house carrying food which the women had prepared, or carrying mattresses and pillows to the guest-house. Women knew who the guests were and kept abreast of the village affairs through the movements of these sons or brothers.

The only time when a woman was allowed in the guest-house was when she presented a legal case against someone. In the presence of the sheikh and the council of elders, she was allowed to state her case, after which she would immediately leave the guest-house, whereupon her closest male relative took up her case.

Female visitors were also not permitted in the guest-house. They stayed with the village women, and ate and slept with them. Female children were strictly barred from the guest-house and it was considered improper for male children to go there.

Boys stayed within the women's domain away from the guest-house, unless they were sent for. Only men who had passed the age of puberty were allowed in the guest-house.

The Guest-House as the Village Conduit to the Outside World

The guest-house should be seen as conceptually opposed to the house. The guest-house was the only space open to outsiders, as opposed to

the house which was closed to outsiders. Its placement at the Daher compound kept the visitors away from the village living quarters, hence maintaining minimal contact between visitors and the village inhabitants. This location also allowed for the identification of strangers, and control over their movements when entering and leaving the village.

The guest-house was placed very close to the mosque with easy access through the village saha (Fig. 5.2). With such a location one can observe a sharp division between the space occupied by the "public" unit, on the one hand, and the domestic unit, the extended family courtyards, on the other. Peddlers, gypsies, and Beduin, but mostly peasants from neighbouring villages, came to Deir Ghassaneh to sell their produce. They were allowed access to the saha, which functioned as the village marketplace. In addition, some women who came from other villages carried their produce and went to sell it among the village houses.

The guest-house with its size, scale, furnishings and the food served in it, was seen as bringing prestige to Deir Ghassaneh. Every adult male in the village contributed towards the expenses of the guest-house in order to keep up a "respectful" image for Deir Ghassaneh. An annual sum of money referred to as mal-al-wasat was collected from each family during harvest time. This money was spent on communal ceremonies and obligations. Invited to a wedding in a neighbouring village, the sheikh and council of elders gave the bridegroom a wedding present (nqout) on behalf of the village as a whole. When paying their condolences, they took with them bags of rice and one or more sheep to give to the family of the deceased. The entertaining gypsies who visited the village were also paid from mal-al-wasat. Omar Saleh El-Barghouthi writes that the expenses of the guest-house were covered by the income of special land assigned for the madafah. "Up to some sixty years ago, emirs used to give special land to the madafat, (Madafat is the plural of madafah), the income of which would be spent on the guest-house" (Barghouthi, 1924: 180).

The daily expenses of the guest-house visitors were also paid in turn by the adult males of the village. Each paid more or less according

to his ability. Each share was called qaws (arch), referring to the arch inside the madafah where all the men's names were hung, written on round pieces of paper. This system assured that each male participated in rotation; each knew his turn. The shares were of three categories: 1) the poorest families in the village provided food for the guest's horses (qaws mkhali); 2) middle income families were expected to cook food consisting of either chicken or meat meals for ordinary guests (qaws door sghir); 3) rich families were to cook or kill animals for important guests. This qaws system ensured that each paid according to his ability and kept his turn. (In some villages, other than Deir Ghassaneh, there was a judge for the guest-affairs who organized the expenses of the guest-house. In other villages, dues called al-ma'dood were paid by every adult male). If the guest was distinguished, men would ignore the qaws and compete to treat the guest. In such cases the sheikh had to intervene and decide who would be honoured to kill his animals in celebration of the guest (Abu-Zuhair, interview:1984).

Finally, unlike most towns, villages, including Deir Ghassaneh, did not have a khan for public night lodging; hence the guest-house lodged passing travellers who did not have friends or relatives in the village. It also housed government officials (who came to circulate government announcements) and tax-collectors, who normally spent about ten days in Deir Ghassaneh witnessing the harvest and collecting taxes.

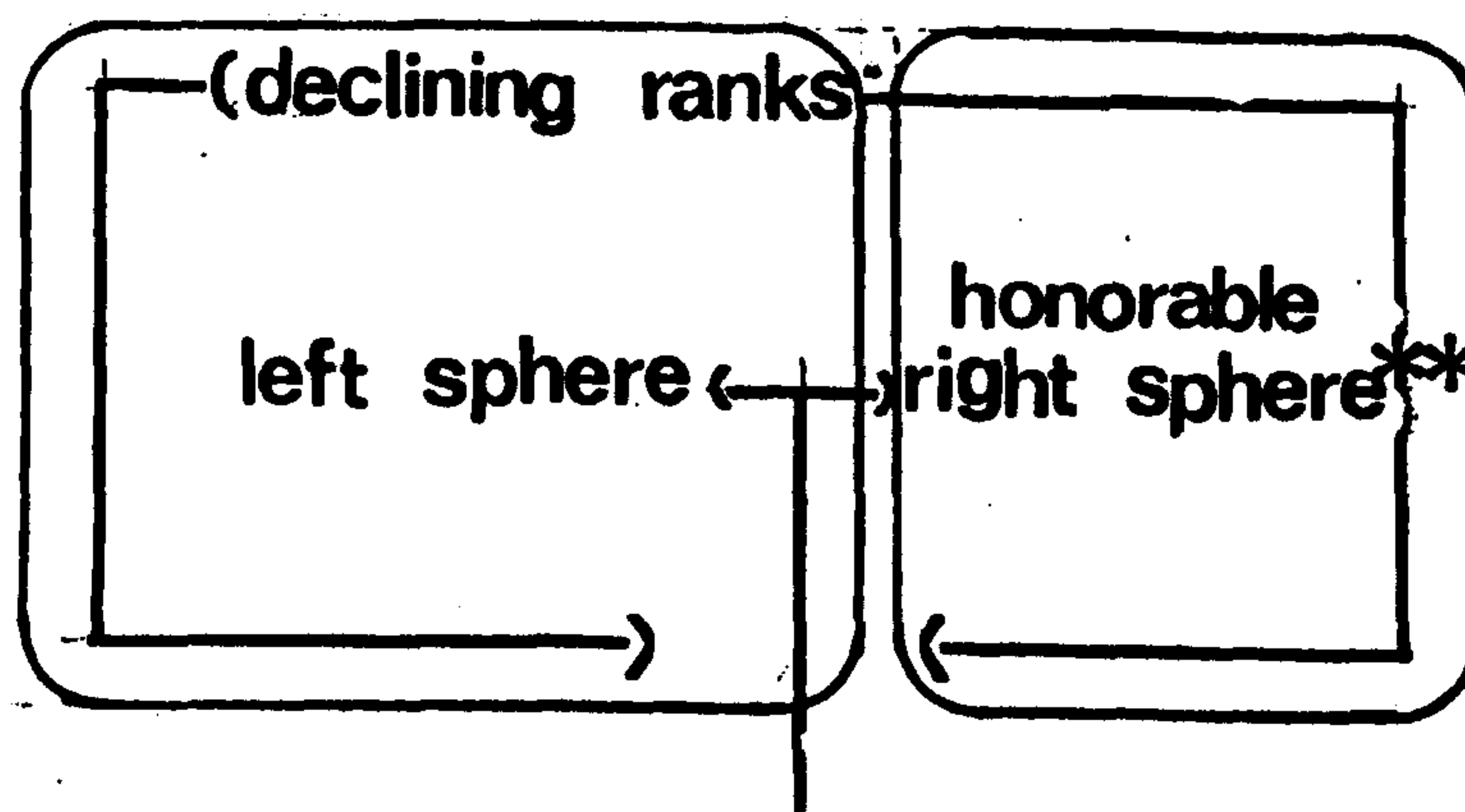
However, more distinguished visitors were accompanied by the village sheikh to his 'allieh (elevated room) to spend the night. The 'allieh, which was located in the upper level of the sheikh's compound could be reached from the entrance vestibule without going through the "private" domestic unit of the sheikh's. In this case visitors were not only diverted away from the domestic unit on a horizontal plane, but also as far as possible on a vertical plane.

Invisible Spheres and Ranking Patterns in the Guest-House

Although both the saha and madafah had no visible partitions or levels which separated those of higher status from others of lower

status, the invisible boundaries were many. They were similar to those non-visible curtains which kept women and children away from the male dominated arena.

By examining the seating arrangements and other behavioural patterns in the guest-house, one can find a clear and strong hierarchical ordering. This hierarchy was strictly maintained, both among the members of the village themselves, as well as between them and their visitors. Even though the guest-house was physically one space, practically it was divided into two, each of which was valued differently. From the descriptions given to me by some villagers in Deir Ghassaneh (Abu Hani and Abu Adnan; Interviews: 1984), one realizes the presence of "spaces within spaces". The area to the left of the door, as one enters (Fig. 5.7) was of lower status, while the area to the right of the door was considered honourific, or of a higher status. The presence of a step between the two areas is a witness to such divisions. Thus it was on the right section that



**** The sheikh's seat Ent.**

Fig. 5.7: Hierarchical seating arrangement in the madafah.

the village sheikh always sat. Places next to him were designated for individuals of social and political distinction, whether elderly men from the village or outside notable visitors. The location where one could sit depended on who else was present. In the case of the visitors, the seating arrangement created a host/guest relationship, which signified a boundary between visitors and hosts. Visitors were always invited to sit on the right side. The arrangement was in a descending order of rank,

"respectable" local residents sitting amongst the visitors.

The seating arrangement reflected the peasant's view of how his universe was ordered, and the way in which he perceived his place within his group. Hence, the seating arrangement was continuously reassessed. As a newcomer arrived, each of those seated had to judge whether the newcomer was more respected than him. If he thought so, he vacated his position and insisted that the other should take it. To a certain extent, respect was shown to the elderly regardless of their social status.

This hierarchical ordering was reflected not only in the seating arrangement, but also in the manner in which visitors were received. Undistinguished visitors, such as peddlers, came into the madafah and left with little attention given to them, except by those seated next to them. The entrance of a distinguished person, such as the village sheikh or one of his honourable guests, was accompanied by many rituals. The sheikh's behaviour and movements indicated the status of the visitor. Visitors of higher rank than the village sheikh were received by the sheikh and his council of elders, who would go out to the saha to receive the guest. If the visitor was of equal status, then the sheikh would receive him at the door of the madafah. When the visitors were of unequal status, the sheikh would remain seated and shake hands with the visitors while sitting. Hence the distance between the sheikh's seating place and the reception point reflected the rank of the visitor. As distinguished visitors came in, everyone stood up to show his respect for the newcomer. The men would sit down only after the sheikh and his visitors were seated. A load of mattresses, pillows and cushions would also be brought in for the guests. The number and quality of mattresses and cushions brought in also reflected the status of the visitor. While important guests were flooded with cushions, peddlers and poor guests sat on strawmats like the rest. Complete silence usually prevailed while the sheikh or his visitor talked, addressing those present. Once the sheikh and his visitor started talking to one another, the rest of the group could whisper amongst themselves.

The way in which coffee and food was offered followed the same

procedure. In serving coffee honourable guests and elders were served first, and the rest followed. The Nablus historian Ihsan Al-Nimr noted the different words used while offering the coffee depending on the status of the guest. The expression (sub) "pour the coffee" was used for those visitors who came to the diwan (the town guest-house). The expression "qaddem" ("offer the coffee") was used for important guests. In the latter case the coffee cups were offered on a tray as opposed to being carried by hand. The expression (erfa') "lift the coffee" was used for very distinguished guests. Here the coffee cup was put in a special case and then offered to the guest on a tray (Nimr, 1962: 462). A similar pattern was followed in offering the food. The kind of food offered to the guest differed also according to the visitor's status. Basically visitors were ranked into three status categories (Barghouthi, manuscript: 16), and hence the food offered to them was also of three categories.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

By examining the spatial organization and articulation of the village saha and guest-house, and by looking at the activities which took place in them, as the people used them and their behavioural patterns, one can conclude the following:

- 1) The saha acted as a centripetal force, uniting the different parts of the village around it.
- 2) The village saha was seen as the most important centre of activity in the village which gained its meaning by gathering around it the village's most important structures: the village guest-house, the village mosque and the sheikh's compound.
- 3) The guest-house was the place where the integration of the village as a whole was manifested. It acted as the arena where the village appeared as an administrative, legal and political unit especially vis-a-vis other villages, and as a unit for social control.

- 4) Being the centre of activities, this male dominated space enhanced the sense of village identity, as opposed to a strong kinship affiliation.
- 5) The physical distance between this village centre and surrounding village quarters reflected a strong social hierarchy which existed in the village: while the dwellings of the influential Daher families opened directly to the saha, the 'lower' quarter was the farthest from the saha (chapter 4).
- 6) The guest-house was a place where patterns of public behaviour were defined, emphasising distinctions within a hierarchical order among the following sets: men vs. women, old vs. young, high status vs. low, and villagers vs. outsiders.
- 7) Separation between genders was the basis for the saha spatial organisation. The village saha and guest-house were a male communal arena as opposed to the private courtyards and houses which were the domain of women.
- 8) The number and placement of the guest-house(s) reflected power relations between village clans.
- 9) The guest-house was the only space open to outsiders and strangers, as opposed to the village living quarters (harat) which were strictly closed to outsiders, or even to men from other clans.

FIG. 5.8: SCENES FROM VILLAGE PLAZA AND GUEST-HOUSE



Interior of guest-house



Decorative stones on west facade



The guest-house in
deterioration



Entry to plaza located
under guest-house

CHAPTER SIX

THE SACRED ENVIRONMENT OF DEIR GHASSANEH

INTRODUCTION

"The ancient, like the modern savages, saw man always as part of society, and society as imbedded in nature and dependent upon cosmic forces. For them, nature and man did not stand in opposition and did not, therefore, have to be apprehended by different modes of cognition The fundamental difference between the attitudes of modern and ancient man as regards the surrounding world is this: for modern, scientific man the phenomenal world is primarily an "It"; for ancient - and also for primitive - man it is a "Thou" (Frankfort, et al, 1949: 12).

This chapter discusses the impact of religion on the peasant's ordering of his spatial world in the village of Deir Ghassaneh at the turn of this century.

Religion permeated most aspects of the fallah's life and hence it was difficult to isolate the impact of religion from other social, cultural, and economic factors. However, for the purpose of this analysis, religion is dealt with as a more or less separate force.

The sacred environment, defined here as the totality of sacred places, times and ceremonies, acted as an egalitarian force, most immediately for the unity of the village community, ultimately, for the unity of the cosmos. Islamic beliefs reinforced the village collective identity, not only by transcending kinship boundaries but also by relating the village community to a larger world, that of the supranational community of the faithful (ummat-al-muslimin).

In the context of this work, the sacred places located within and outside of Deir Ghassaneh are seen as foci linked together by rituals and forming a meaningful network. The different elements which formed a kind of spatial-religious grid varied widely in their scale and in the significance of their role. The elements of the sacred environment (mosques, holy sanctuaries, saints' tombs, and landscape features) did not form a separate environmental level of their own,

"a cosmological level", but constituted parts of the levels of environment discussed in previous chapters.

As the fallah's religion did not pertain only to the acts of worship and fulfillment of religious obligations but permeated most aspects of his everyday life, so did the different elements of the sacred environment interact with daily existence. The spatial and conceptual aspects of the sacred environment extended from Mecca, the centre of the world for the whole muslim community, to amulets against the evil eye. The hierarchical order of the sacred environment corresponded closely to a hierarchical concept of the cosmos (al-kawn) and to a hierarchical system of worship and practices. Holy places such as el-ka'aba, the Dome of the Rock and regional sanctuaries pertained to a level beyond the village boundaries, a regional environmental level. The religious ceremony of reaching or being in the "centre of the world" was, and continues to be, symbolized by the hajj, a ritual act of pilgrimage to Mecca performed by members who belong to the Muslim community (ummat-el-muslimin). Sanctified features such as holy trees and haunted springs pertained to the landscape level, the mosque to the village level, and holy tombs to the living quarter level. Many other sacred artifacts pertained to the object level.

Not only did the different sacred elements belong to different environmental levels, but they also had different functions. While places located at the regional level (Mecca, Dome of the Rock, regional sanctuaries) functioned as foci for the unity of the whole Muslim community, the village mosque enhanced village unity and village identity amongst the men, while local saint's tombs did not transcend the realities of kinship and gender separations.

The world of tangible physical artifacts--mosque, holy sanctuary, tombs and material objects - mediated the fallah's abstract system of religious beliefs with his daily life.

Both natural as well as social powers acted upon the fallah. Elsewhere, we have discussed the social forces and shown how they enabled him to enter into relationships with his fellow peasants,

and assured the continued functioning of the social order. Allocation of resources and functions, division of labour and product, coordination, superordination, acceptance of authority and the institutionalisation norms and goals, were all primary forms of these relationships.

The fallah's life was affected particularly by natural forces outside the sphere of his control. The fallah saw himself as part of nature and his destiny as involved with nature's processes and events. He harmonized his cyclical agricultural activities with the established order of nature. However, nature's unpredictable and uncontrollable events - droughts, floods, earthquakes - lay beyond the fallah's control, and hence escaped his ordering abilities. Thus entering into relationships with suprahuman forces - God, the holy saints (awlia) and demons - helped the peasant to explain, control and manipulate the world of the unknown.

The totality of these relationships (i.e. man/man, man/superhuman) united the experienced world of everyday life, and the unseen world, or to use the phrase of O'Dea "the concept of the beyond", into a total reality, which made the norms and rules of the community part of a larger ethical order. The here-and-now realities became meaningful only by being fitted into a transcendental reference to the "beyond" (O'Dea, 1966: 6).

The sacred environment is seen in the context of this work as the symbolisation and concretisation of the "beyond". The sacred environment is also seen as the milieu which enhanced stability and order, and contributed to the maintenance of the existing social order.

At the turn of this century, the village of Deir Ghassaneh was inhabited exclusively by Muslims. In principle, Islamic laws and traditions are embodied in the holy book (the Koran), the practices of the prophet Mohammad (Sunna), and the traditions of Mohammad and his companions (Hadith). This framework constituted, and continues to constitute, the "model" and the guiding principles for all Muslim communities. The meaning of Islamic principles and codes, came to

be interpreted in different ways in the various social and economic structures of the societies which embraced Islam.

Our main concern here is to investigate both the meaning of Islam in the community of Deir Ghassaneh, in as much as it had substantial consequences for the ordering of the fallah's spatial environment, and the way in which Islamic laws and codes were incorporated in the fallah's everyday life.

Islam on the one hand deals with the revered world and with an order of symbolic understanding that contributes to an ideology articulating the nature of al-kawn (the cosmos). On the other hand, Islam deals with the most mundane aspects of the community's life and hence plays a significant part in the discourse and practice of everyday life (Cana'an, 1934). In the village of Deir Ghassaneh, as in other villages, religious rituals were an important component of many social occasions such as births, marriages, circumcisions and deaths (Granqvist, 1931: 35; 1965). Islamic laws and traditions also acted as the principal guide for laws of inheritance. The mahram (forbidden categories of persons for marriages), dictated by Islamic laws, affected kinship and marriage relations. The separation and interaction of men and women were based partially on the mahram (Khatib-Chahidi, 1981). However, the varying degrees of separation and interaction between men and women in Deir Ghassaneh were also influenced by the social and economic status of the different clans (chapter 4). Islamic laws and traditions were also the basis of education and learning in the village's kuttab (elementary school run by the sheikh of the mosque) which taught the young boys recitation of the Koran, basic arithmetic and the Arabic language. Rules of purity and pollution, what was forbidden (haram) and what was permissible (halal), were all influenced by religious concepts and beliefs.

The fact that Islam permeated many aspects of community social life should not compel us to think of it as a monolithic force in village life. Rather, as Gilsenan noted, it should be seen as a consciousness that "identifies varying relations of practice, representation, symbol, concept and worldview within the same society

and between different societies" (Gilsenan, 1982: 19). The influence of Islam on village life should not be explained exclusively as the hegemony of a religious ideology, nor should we assume Islam's primacy over social, economic, or political factors. Instead religion here is viewed as a limited but crucial component in ordering the spatial world-view of the peasant.

The Fallah's Beliefs And Practices

The nineteenth-century Palestinian peasant shared with 'orthodox' (urban-based) Islam, beliefs which were centered on the most fundamental principle of Islamic teaching, al-tawhid (the unity of God---- "there is no god except God"), which also means the integration and unity of the cosmos (al-kawn). The Muslim's beliefs were focused on a hierarchical conception of the kawn and hence on a hierarchical system of worship and practices which comprises various levels of good and evil. At the top of this order, was God (Allah) who is one in his holiness, powers and truth.

The fallah like other Muslims, regarded Allah as the ruler of all creation. To God he assigned many characteristics, some from human nature and other super-human. The names of God (99 known to man and the hundreth known only to God), attested to the varying attributes of God: God the merciful, the patient, the divine, the eternal, the truth, etc. Both God and al-kawn had dual attributes. God was perceived as the compassionate giver and at the same time as the avenger and the punisher.

The five pillars (arkan) of Islamic faith are the fundamental duties incumbent upon all muslims. These pillars include: declaration of faith, the five daily ritual prayers, almsgiving, fasting in the month of Ramadan and the pilgrimage to Mecca once in a life time for every Muslim who is economically and physically able. The peasants of Deir Ghassaneh also shared with the whole Muslim community religious festivals; both the Sacrifice Feast ('eid el adha) and the Ramadan Feast ('eid el fitr), are communal festive occasions. The prophet's birthday, the night of Divine Decree, and the commemoration of the night journey and ascent of the prophet are also shared sacred

times.

Peasant Islam, however, significantly modified orthodox practices. The supernatural and unseen realm which occupied a significant part in the fallah's consciousness and practices did not always reflect orthodox religious thought but sometimes ran contrary to it. Though the fallah was monotheistic in his belief and had a fatalistic attitude concerning his future and destiny (God's decrees are unchanged by any human being), he still honoured and revered many folk saints (awlia) besides God. The saints were seen as the blessed men of God with superhuman powers; they occupied a position between God and man and hence acted as mediators. Saints were of two levels: Ahmadiyah (forbearing) who shared characteristics with God, and the a'djam who shared characteristics with demons, hence, saints were both honoured and feared at the same time. Some of these saints had a regional reputation, and were visited and worshipped by members of neighbouring villages; others were considered local saints visited and honoured by villagers from Deir Ghassaneh only, or even members of one clan. Villagers of Deir Ghassaneh also honoured regional saints located outside of their own village. The Muslim community in Palestine had three important seasonal pilgrimages to holy shrines referred to as mawasim (singl. mawsim): mawsim en-Nabi Rubeen (prophet Rubeen), mawsim en-Nabi Musa, and mawsim en-Nabi Saleh (Fig. 6.1) As recently as the 1940s, the women of Deir Ghassaneh had their own mawsim (discussed below).

In addition to being intermediaries to the Almighty, local saints acquired an independent "divinity" on their own. They therefore, come closer to man than God himself:

"As in ancient times God still appeared to some people, to guide and to help them. But the saints appear more frequently to reproach, protect and to assist them, hence more sacrifices and vows were made to the saints than to God and also more direct help was expected from them than from God" (Cana'an, 1934: 63).

Besides his beliefs in God and saints, the fallah respected and



1. Mawsim en-Nabi Musa: a major annual event



2. Mawsim en-Nabi Rubin, near Jaffa



3. Mawsim en-Nabi Rubin



4. Mawsim en-Nabi Saleh celebrated in Ramleh

Photographs from
Graham-Brown (1980)

Fig. 6.1: The three regional religious seasons (mawasim) celebrated by the muslim community in Palestine.

feared natural objects which were endowed with supernatural powers. Many trees, stones, water sources, springs, cisterns, caves, buildings and other particular landmarks were believed to possess mysterious qualities, primarily because they were conceived of as places of refuge for evil powers. They were believed to be the abode of demons who had their residence at certain fixed spots. Isolation, darkness, and abandonment seemed to be the qualities which attracted demons. It was a common belief that demons came from the "lower world" and hence were found in places which were closer to the interior of the earth, e.g., springs, caves, cracks, and trees (since their roots went deep into the earth). Sacrifices were brought to the demons in order to please them and stop them from injuring humans.

God, saints and demons were all conceived as part of the supernatural universe. However, the relationship among them was not independent of the natural environment, and man could communicate with them through the help of certain material objects. Man's relationship to God, saints and demons was regulated by the designation of sacred places. The sacredness of such spaces and the boundaries of such areas and other "dangerous" spots were all influenced by religious beliefs and practices which had their impact on the villagers' movements and behaviour.

THE SACRED ENVIRONMENT: Place, Time and Ceremony

While agricultural activities have changed the natural landscape by the process of parcelling, terracing and planting the land (chapter 3), religion has transformed "neutral" spaces into places invested with religious reverence. The attribution of sacredness has taken place with a minimum transformation of the natural landscape and hence is usually less physically apparent than changes caused by agricultural activities.

In regulating their relations towards God, the saints and the demons, the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh have made sacred certain places, such as the holy shrines, and some natural landscape features. Contacts

with the Holy from such places were believed to be more direct and certain. Times such as the month of Ramadan, the night of the Divine Decree (laylat el-qadr) the night journey and ascent (isra'), prayer times, and Thursday night, have all been designated as sacred times. As in the case of sacred places, at sacred times man was closest to God and the holy saints. Such rituals enabled the villagers to act out responses and feelings involved in this relationship. Many of the rituals and ceremonies must be performed in particular places, at set times and often with the help of pious men such as saints (awlia), learned men ('ulama) or sheikhs.

Sacred places, sacred times, and ceremonies -- were all elements forming the peasant's sacred environment. These elements formed a kind of socio-religious grid that played an important role in regulating social relations.

Although the three elements were equally crucial in the formation of the sacred environment of Deir Ghassaneh, the focus of our discussion will be mainly on space and spatial organisation.

The division into sacred, neutral, and profane spaces is not always clear and is seemingly arbitrary. Although certain places were built for spiritual purposes, such as the holy shrines and the mosque, they also had "mundane" social functions (as was the case when the mosque was used as a guest house on days other than Fridays). The same was true of "profane" spaces which often had symbolic or cosmic aspects. Some "profane" locations became temporarily sacred. This was the case whenever a religious ceremony took place. For example, any locality where a villager prayed became temporarily sacred. Such activities as the construction of a new house, agricultural activities, marriages, and deaths, all had transitory symbolic or sacred aspects attached to them. Certain elements of buildings such as the entrance door, thresholds, and dark corners, also embodied spiritual aspects.

THE VILLAGE MOSQUE: "The House of God" (Beit Allah)

Deir Ghassaneh's only mosque, believed by its inhabitants to have

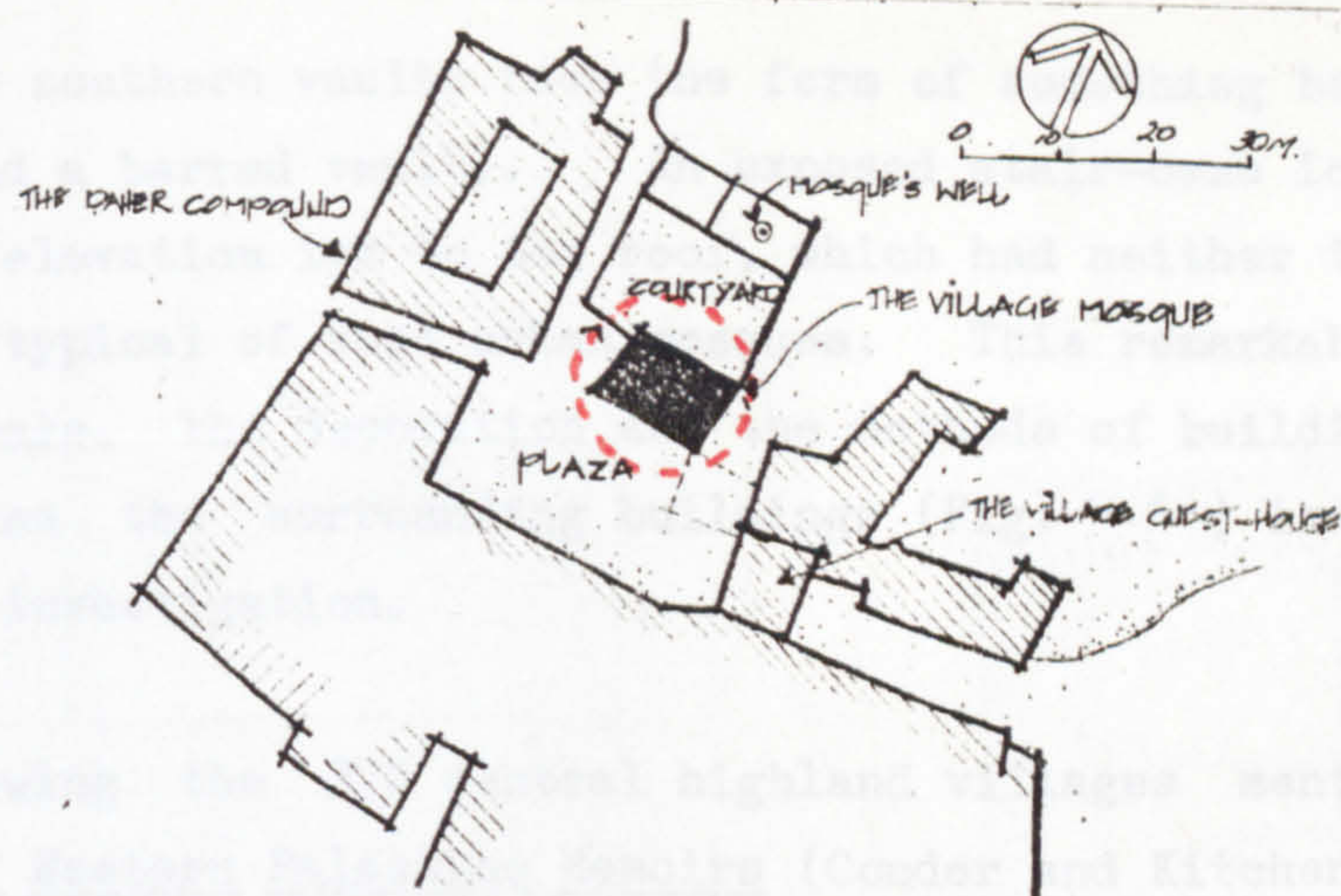


Fig.6.2: Map showing the location of the village mosque

been an ancient church, constituted the northern boundary of the communal saha (plaza). It comprised an important complementary element in this male-dominated arena; plaza, guest-house and mosque. In this communal place the community acted out a significant element of its own religious identity. A strong sense of belonging to a Muslim Community (ummat al-muslimin) was symbolized by the religious ceremonies of the Friday prayer, as all male members of the community stood before God as equals and for a common purpose. This was also symbolized by its orientation towards Mecca, the centre of the Muslim world.

In contrast to the majestic and finely elaborated buildings which surrounded the village main plaza, the mosque of Deir Ghassaneh was built out of rubble stones and was a very simple and relatively insignificant looking building. The simple door which separated the mosque's sacred domain from the profane saha outside, also contrasted strongly with the elaborate arched gate of the sheikh's dwelling (chapter 4).

The mosque's rectangular structure itself also separated the village saha from the mosque's courtyard. To the north of the courtyard lay the mosque's well, which was used for ablutions by those preparing to pray. As one entered the relatively dark interior from the two doors facing north, one faced the direction of Mecca marked by the mihrab (prayer niche), an arched recession in the southern wall. The imperfectly rectangular space was roofed by four crooked cross vaults

(the two southern vaults took the form of something between a cross vault and a barred vault). An exposed stair-case located on the northern elevation led to the roof, which had neither the minaret nor the dome typical of most urban mosques. This remarkable incongruity in the scale, the decoration and the methods of building between the mosque and the surrounding buildings (Fig. 6.4) is striking and requires investigation.

By reviewing the 372 central highland villages mentioned in The Survey of Western Palestine Memoirs (Conder and Kitchener, 1881), I found that only 14 villages were noted as having a "little mosque". Eight out of 16 Christian villages were noted as having a chapel, a church or convent. The rest were not noted as having a mosque or church (see appendices II and III).

In Tent Work in Palestine (vol. II), Conder makes the following remark:

"You may live for months in the out-of-the way parts of Palestine without seeing a mosque or hearing the call of the Muedhen to prayer" (Conder, 1878: 218).

In a similar vein C.T. Wilson wrote:

"The village mosques are for the most part miserable buildings, dark and dirty, with nothing whatever in their outward appearance to show that they are sacred edifices... Occasionally in the larger villages a more pretentious building may be seen, and one kept in better order, with now and then a medaneh" (Wilson, 1906: 21).

Though one could argue that "miserable", "dark" and "dirty" are emotive terms and may have been used from an ethnocentric point of view, it remains evident that most village mosques were just small rooms designated for prayers. Wilson noted for example that mosques were places which often functioned both as a guest-house and prayer areas (ibid.).

The absence of an elaborate mosque can be explained by the following:

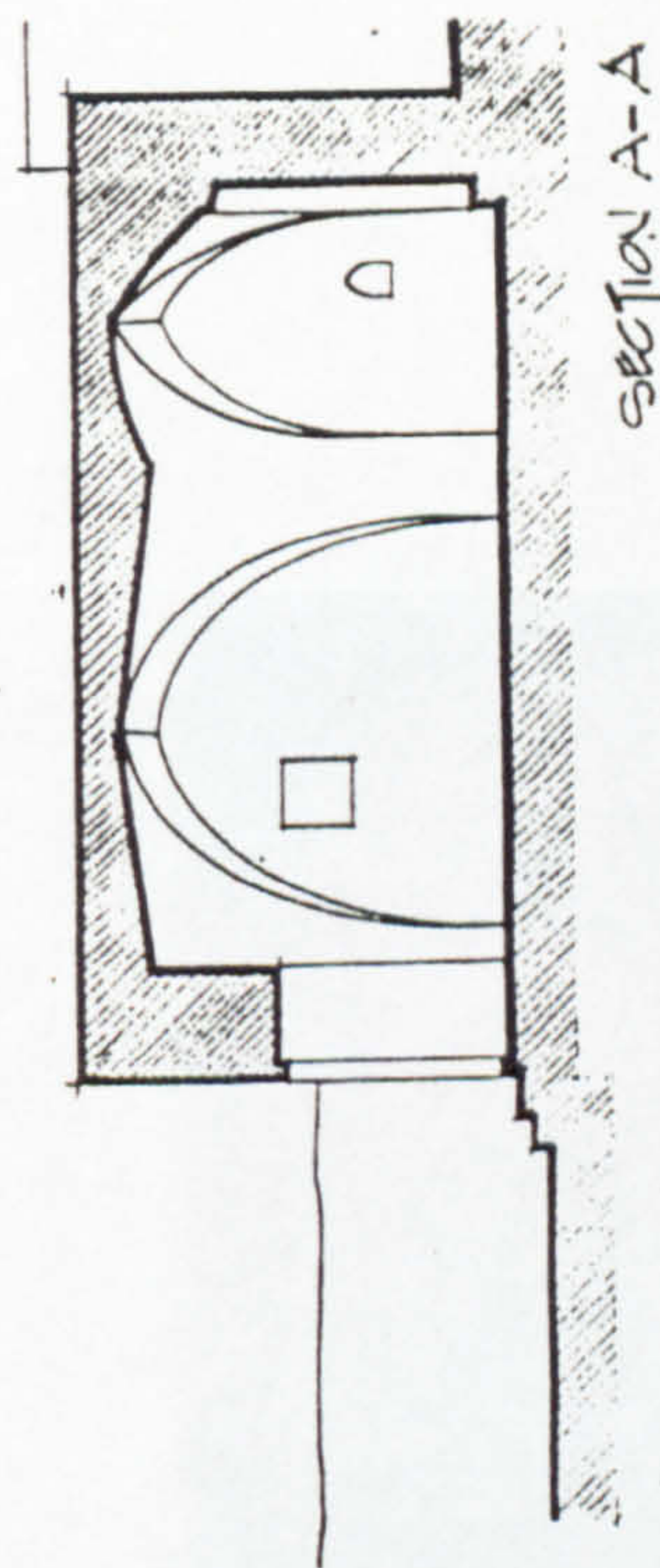
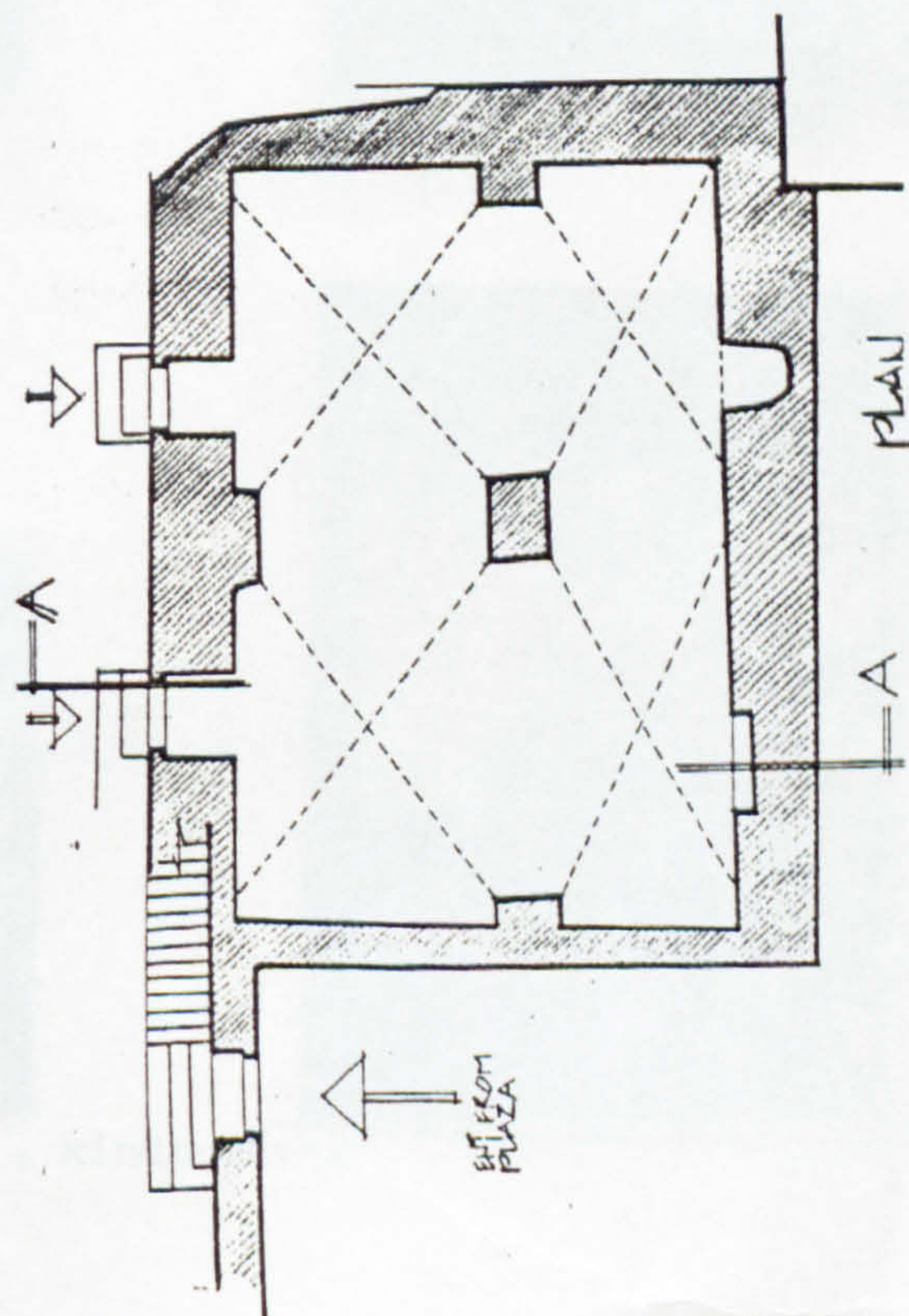
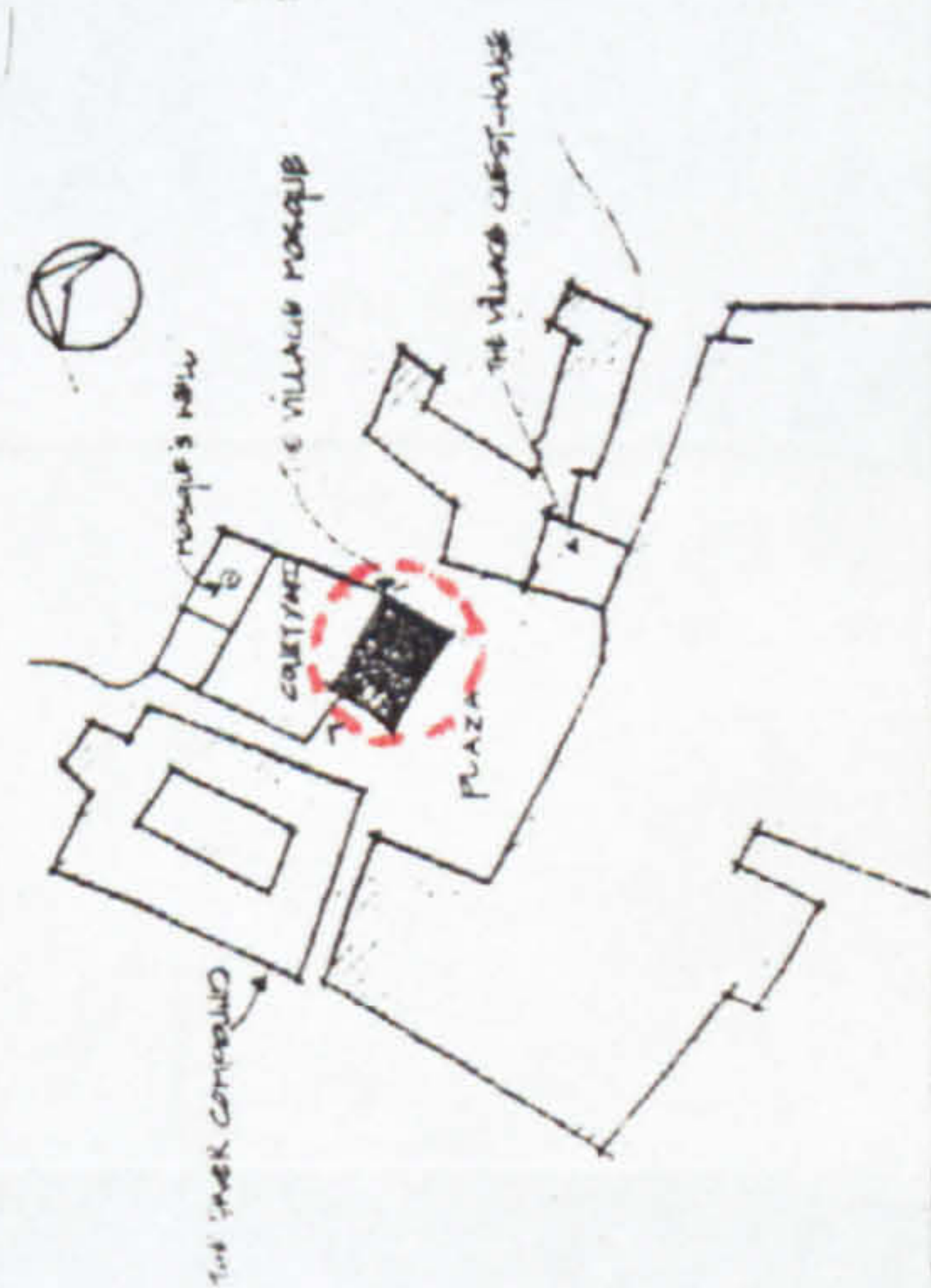
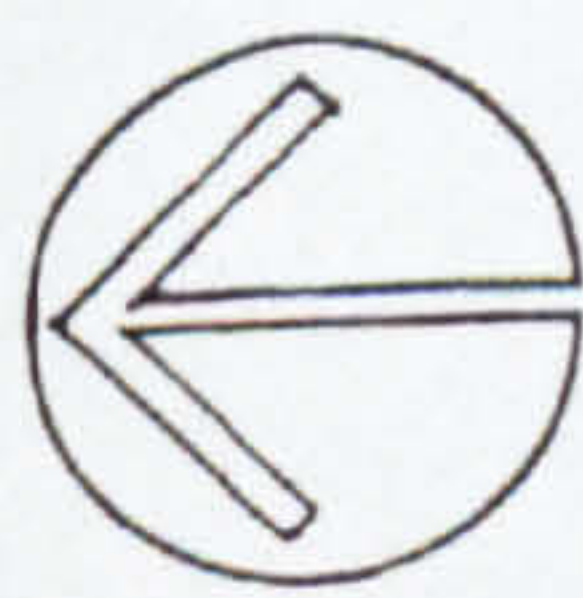
1. The nature of the God/man relationship and the prayer rituals,

Fig. 6.3

The village mosque, Dier-Ghassaneh.

Surveyed 1985.

scale: 0 1 2 3 M 1 M





Mosque entry from the plaza



simple features of mosque building



elaborate Barghouthi building



interior of mosque used today as a kindergarten



Fig. 6.4: The simple village mosque contrasted sharply with the elaborate Barghouthi buildings around it

which did not necessarily require a fixed sacred place.

2. The lack of a hierarchical or specialized clerical order among the village's religious men.
3. The relatively limited role which the village mosque played in the community life, especially if compared with the role played by the holy shrines or the village guest-house, (see Chapter 5).

The mosque was basically the place where Muslim males of the community performed their daily prayers. However, except for the Friday noon prayers, the fallah could perform his prayers wherever he happened to be. The place where he prayed became "temporarily sacred". This direct relationship with God minimized the need to perform his prayers in a mosque.

In addition to prayers on feast days and funerals, the Friday noon prayer (salat el-jama'a, the "prayer of the gathering") was a public social and religious event for the village. The Friday prayer was performed in the mosque and was led by the village imam. Shortly before noon-time, the village adult males started gathering at the mosque courtyard; they stood in small groups exchanging greetings and chatting as they proceeded to form several long rows, one behind the other. All stood behind the imam who faced the mihrab. The spatial ordering of men in the mosque was very different from that of the guest-house. In the mosque the position occupied depended primarily on the time of arrival (Abu-Adnan, 1985: interview). It by no means reflected social or political status. Ideally, the mosque was the place where men faced their one God as equals; hence there was no place for "higher" or "lower" status. In contrast, arrangements in the guest-house stressed the hierarchical social order, and men had to re-order their seating as new arrivals entered.

However, Tomas Gerholm in Market, Mosque and Mafrag, describing a mosque in a Yemeni village, argues that social hierarchy outside the mosque was in one way or another carried into the mosque, but perhaps in a very subtle manner:

"There is no organized maintenance of social hierarchy within the mosque. But I also believe that it would be going too far to describe the interaction in the mosque as a truly egalitarian counterpoint to the hierarchical melody played on the other side of the walls..... watching the men assembling in the precincts of the mosque just before prayer, one senses an order not very different from that of the market... and since there is no active re-arrangement inside the mosque, the status groups tend to be reproduced as a consequence of men's arriving in these groups, as it were carrying the outside order with them" (Gerholm, 1977: 176).

Although this was probably true in Deir Ghassaneh, it is also true that the social order there, which was very strictly observed in daily activities, was intentionally relaxed during prayer time.

In the mosque, there was only the imam (the leader of the Friday prayers) who also functioned as the khatib (preacher). His role and status had always been limited both in function and in authority, and did not embody any "real powers". On the contrary, in most cases the imam was socially deprived and dependent on the contributions and charity of the villagers. His status derived from his being one of the very few literate men in the village, and he functioned as the sheikh of the kuttab (village school) (Granqvist, 1947: 148-149). In a separate building from the mosque, the imam met every morning with the boys to read and recite the Koran. Everyday the boys took a loaf of bread to the kuttab's sheikh. After two years of studying, the boys graduated from the kuttab (once they had recited all of the Koran). They would celebrate the completion of their study by going around the village with their fellows singing and praising their sheikh. Once they had gathered enough food for their teacher, they would go back and give him his present. The imam was also responsible for marriage contracts in the village, and took care of the funerals by preparing the grave and sometimes washing the body of the dead.

Altogether, the functions of the imam or the khatib illustrated a lack of hierarchical or clerical divisions among religious functionaries (unlike specialized clerical orders existing in Christian churches or among Shi'ite Muslims). Here there was no "priesthood" of any kind. In the same manner the direct relation

between man and God in village religious ritual, explained the absence of elaborate architecture in religious monuments.

Finally, the fact that there has always been only one mosque (as opposed to a number of mosques in the different clan-based living-quarters), illustrated the ability of the village to transcend the factional kinship-based identity of the village. In this the mosque performed a communal egalitarian function. However, the location of the mosque in the compound of the ruling family reminds us that religion also performed a contrary function, that of legitimizing an existing social hierarchy.

THE VILLAGE HOLY SHRINES:

"In almost every village in the country a small building surrounded by a white-washed dome is observable, being the sacred chapel of the place; it is variously called Kubbeh, 'dome', Mazar, 'shrine', or makam, 'station'" (Conder, 1878; II, 218).

At the turn of this century, holy shrines seem to have played a more significant and active role in the everyday socio-religious life of the village than that played by the mosque. While the latter was visited mostly on Fridays, feasts and funeral ceremonies, shrines were visited more or less daily, and while the mosque of Deir Ghassaneh excluded women, holy shrines appeared to be their refuge on many occasions and at whatever time they wished. These holy sanctuaries reflected the fallah's folk or local religious practices while the mosque was the physical manifestation of orthodox Islam, or more specifically one of the five pillars in orthodox Islam.

Deir Ghassaneh had nineteen places which were considered as special or sacred because they functioned as hermitages (khulwat) and burial sites for holy men, more than in any other Bani Zaid village. These sites should be seen as part of a wider network of sacred locations outside the village boundaries. By taking part in the three regional Palestinian religious festivals (mawsim of Nabi Saleh, Nabi Musa and Nabi Rubeen), and also by visiting holy shrines located outside their own village, the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh related to

a spatial and conceptual unit larger than that of their own village.

As Appendix I shows, out of the nineteen sites, seven were said to be those of holy saints (awlia). Not all the awlia of Deir Ghassaneh were honoured or feared in the same way. The saints al-Khawwas al-Rifa'i and al-Majdoub were considered as major awlia (i.e. regional saints revered by neighbouring villages as well as by villagers of Deir Ghassaneh). The other four awlia were considered as minor or local saints. Minor saints were known to practice their authority and influence only at the place where their followers lived. (Cana'an, 1934: 74). Local awlia were honoured by members of Deir Ghassaneh, but to a lesser extent than major awlia.

With no exception, the seven makamat of Deir Ghassaneh were built on top of high places. Cana'an writes that the concept of sacredness of mountains was adopted by the inhabitants of Palestine from ancient times (Cana'an, 1927: 6). It was also believed that high places being closer to the skies, were therefore closer to Allah.

In general, the holy shrines (makamat) were small buildings, square or rectangular in plan and built out of rubble stones. Like other makamat they were often roofed with one or two white-washed domes (fig. 6.5). Domes were only used either for religious buildings or for other significant non-religious buildings such as the elevated rooms ('alali) (see chapter 4). The area and often the trees around the makamat, which were normally owned by the religious endowment (waqf), were also considered sacred. One way of honouring these holy saints, whether regional or local, was to help in the construction or repairs of their holy shrines.

Before discussing the role and the ceremonies which took place in the most honoured shrine in Deir Ghassaneh, al-Khawwas, it is important to notice the popularly-held beliefs about the descents of these awlia and their spatial and social relationship to the village as a whole and to the different clans of Deir Ghassaneh. As Appendix I shows, the most revered and most honoured of the saints were the two regional saints, al-Khawwas and al-Rifa'i. The shrines are both located outside the village built-up area. Both saints were believed



Makam of Sheikh Abdullah



Tomb of Sheikh Abdullah
inside the Makam



Makam of Sheikh Khalid



Makam of Sheikh al-Khawwas



Al-Habit Tomb



Tomb of Sheikh Shehadeh

Fig. 6.5: A number of holy shrines in Deir Ghassaneh

to be strangers, the former from Egypt, the latter from Iraq. Hence both their regional function and their foreign descent made them go beyond (be outside) the village kinship domains in their location.

The majority of saints descended from the "fallaheen" (seven to the lower quarter clans and three to the Shu'aibi clan); the Barghouthi had only two. None came from the ruling family of ed-Daher. It is quite honourable for a clan to have holy saints amongst its members. Hence disputes over the origin of awlia were not uncommon. For example, the origin of sheikh Khaled, one of the villages holy shrines, has been disputed. Both the Barghouthi (Dar Abu Khattab) and the fallaheen (Dar Misshel) claimed that the saint was one of them. Some of these holy men were honoured by one of the clans only. For example, sheikh Khalaf, located in one of the Shu'aibi houses, was honoured only by the Shu'aibi clan. In fact, he was not even known or recognized by members of other clans. There were also two female holy saints, both called al-sheikha Salha (the "benevolent" sheikha). One belonged to the Rabi family and had a hermitage at the Majdoub makam. The other was from the Daher family and resided in the makam of sheikh Abdullah (from the Dawood family).

Along with makamat built over the burial or hermitage sites of highly honoured saints, the tombs of less revered holy men, referred to as sheikhs or hajj, were also venerated. Because they were often easily reached (located inside the village, between the houses, or even inside the houses as in the case of hajj E'mar, people - particularly women - would visit them, light oil lamps or incense and make vows in their names on a daily basis.

Unlike regional holy shrines, local shrines (makamat) and local saints tombs (qubur) did not transcend the reality of kinship groupings and gender separation. Many reflected kinship divisions by the mere fact of being the tombs of descendants of one particular clan. Unlike the village mosque, holy shrines of Deir Ghassaneh were more of the women's domain, since it was mostly women who vowed in the name of these saints. Men merely stopped to pray as they passed a holy shrine during the performance of their daily chores.

Again, unlike regional saints such as Nabi Musa, Nabi Rubeen and Nabi Saleh which were honoured at annual religious festivals, all holy shrines in Deir Ghassaneh except al-Khawwas were honoured and revered on a daily basis. As we will see below al-Khawwas was especially honoured by the women of Deir Ghassaneh and neighbouring villages during the festive day of mawsam el-banat (the season of girls).

THE KHAWWAS SANCTUARY (makam al-Khawwas)

Located on top of a nearby hill, al-Khawwas occupies a prominent and conspicuous location (Fig. 6.6). This makam marks the hermitage site of al-Khawwas, a holy stranger, believed to be from Egypt, who often appeared to the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh.

The small rubble stone building with its two relatively big domes can be seen from a distance as it stands alone against the blue



Fig. 6.6': The Khawwas sanctuary

background of the skies. The isolated and distant location of the shrine not only added to the tranquillity of the place, but made it accessible to all visitors from Deir Ghassaneh and neighbouring villages. Its location in the fields, i.e., outside village male or kinship domains made it possible for women to reach it whenever needed. The ritual act of honouring al-Khawwas was enhanced by the long up-hill trip that one took to reach it.

In front of the makam there is a natural stone platform which functioned as its extension. This platform is partially surrounded by low rubble-stone walls which give a sense of seclusion. The area surrounding the makam (which belongs to the religious endowment (waqf)), was also considered sacred as were all the nearby olive trees. The branches and olives produced by these trees were considered sacred and were not be picked up by anyone except the makam guardian:

"The Mohammedans consider it unlawful to use the branches of these trees for fuel, believing that were they to do so the curse of the saint would rest upon them" (Wilson, 1905: 28).

The same held true for all agricultural produce planted on the land around the makam. In fact the villagers told a story about a man who picked up some broad beans planted by the guardian. As the man ate them, he immediately fell sick and the shapes of broad beans marked his body.

There was a belief widely held amongst the villagers that one of the two domes of the makam (the western dome) was completed overnight by angels (malaikah). The evidence for such a superhuman act was seen in the missing protruding keystone of this particular dome. The eastern dome of the makam was built by the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh themselves. The domes of al-Khwwas were typical of all makamat, as opposed to the cross-vault used to roof the majority of structures in Deir Ghassaneh. In this regard Ardalan and Bakhtiar note that the dome:

"Is not just a way to cover the walls. It is the image of the vault of heaven and beyond it of the infinite and illimitable World of Spirits of which the sphere or circle is the most direct geometric symbol" (Ardalan and Bakhtiar, 1973: XIII).

Around the Khawwas, the villagers would leave all kinds of objects and belongings under the saint's protection: sacks of wheat, grain, brushwood, ploughs and other agricultural implements could be found, and no one would dare to steal anything put under the protection of the saint (weli).

As in the mosque, the entrance of the makam is from the north. As one enters through either one of the two doors, one must bow, showing respect and submission to the spirit of the weli, which was believed to be always present. In the past, the post and lintels of the two doors were painted with henna, which was, and still is, believed to be sacred. The two mihrabs (prayer niches) protruding from the southern elevation (Fig. 6.8) are in the direction of Mecca.

Today the Khawwas, like most other makamat, is neglected and run down. However, until the 1940s the makam had a very serene interior. It had no furnishings except for the few straw mattresses donated to the weli by the villagers. The interior walls, as well as the northern elevation, were kept white-washed. White in Muslim tradition symbolizes the Divine Being, the heavenly light and the good spirit (ibid: XIV). Hence, holy men appeared either in white or green; white cloths were tied around the weli's tomb and silver coins were placed under the threshold of entrances. On the interior walls of the makam some Koranic verses were written. These were believed to drive away evil spirits. On the western wall, there is a small niche where an oil lamp was always kept burning (Fig. 6.7).



Fig. 6.7: Interior of al-Khawwas

Villagers carried with them oil lamps (sometimes olive oil) which they gave to the guardian of the makam (le-kaiyem) who took care of the place. In front of the makam entrance a pitcher of water was kept to refresh visitors.

Villagers from both Deir Ghassaneh and neighbouring villages honoured al-Khawwas by making vows (nider) in his name and by bringing him different offerings. Some lit oil lamps or incense in his honour; some cleaned the makam's floor; some brought him straw mats; others repainted and re-modeled his makam, or made offerings of a lamb on the site.

The Khawwas was also regarded as a healing physician. Women took their sick to the makam so that the spirit of the weli would cure them. In case of troubles such as losing valuables or wanting the beloved to come back safely, women would also visit the makam asking the weli for help. Some visited the makam so that the weli would give them and their children his blessings (barakeh). They would gain his blessings by touching and kissing the makam or by taking some earth back home with them. Although a person could ask the weli for help without visiting his makam, it was believed that he would be more responsive if the person was present at the makam:

"Experience has shown that these awlia will answer more promptly if the person calling upon one of them goes to their sanctuary or calls upon them during the Mosam [religious festivals]" (Cana'an, 1934: 78).

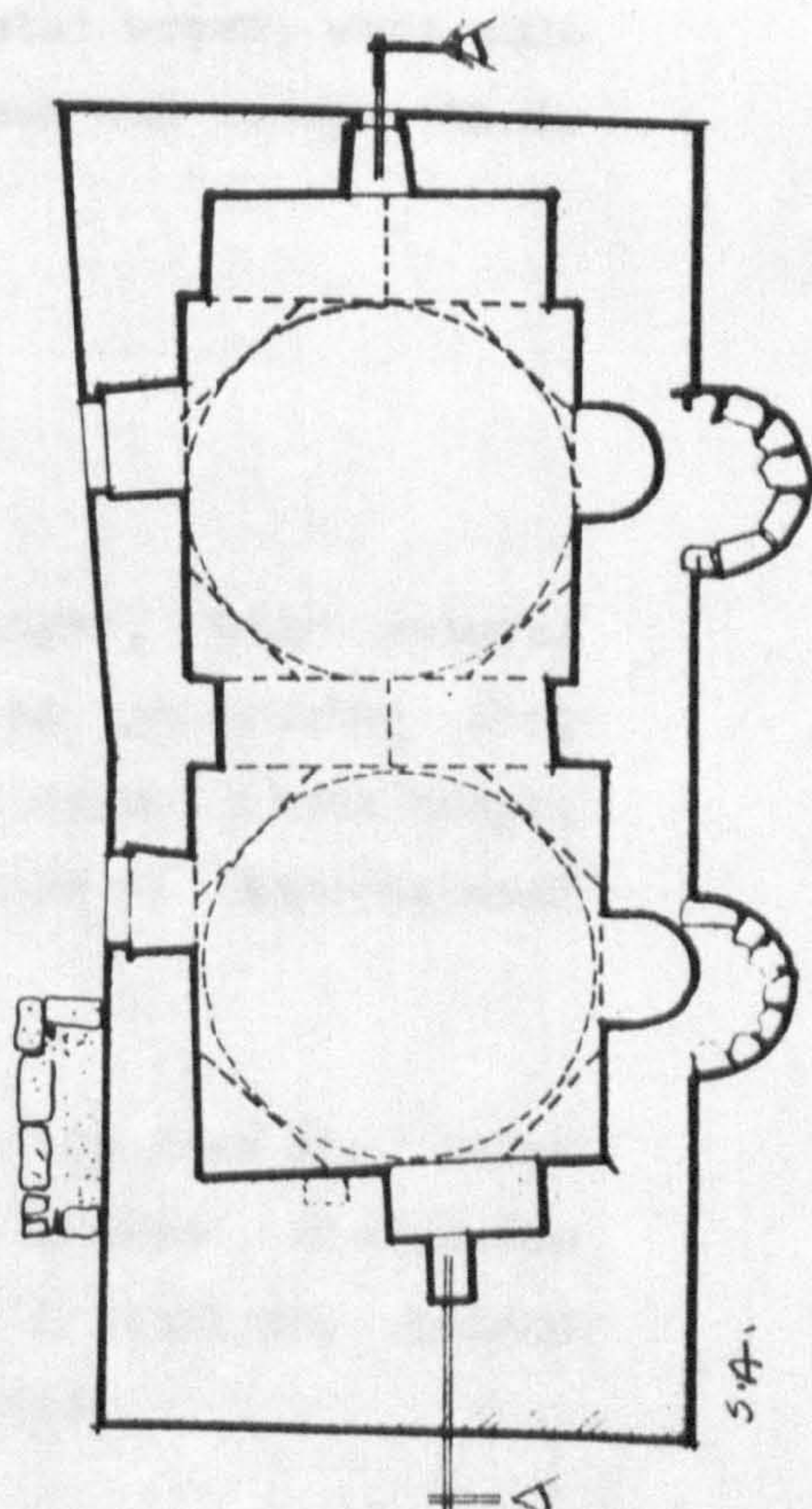
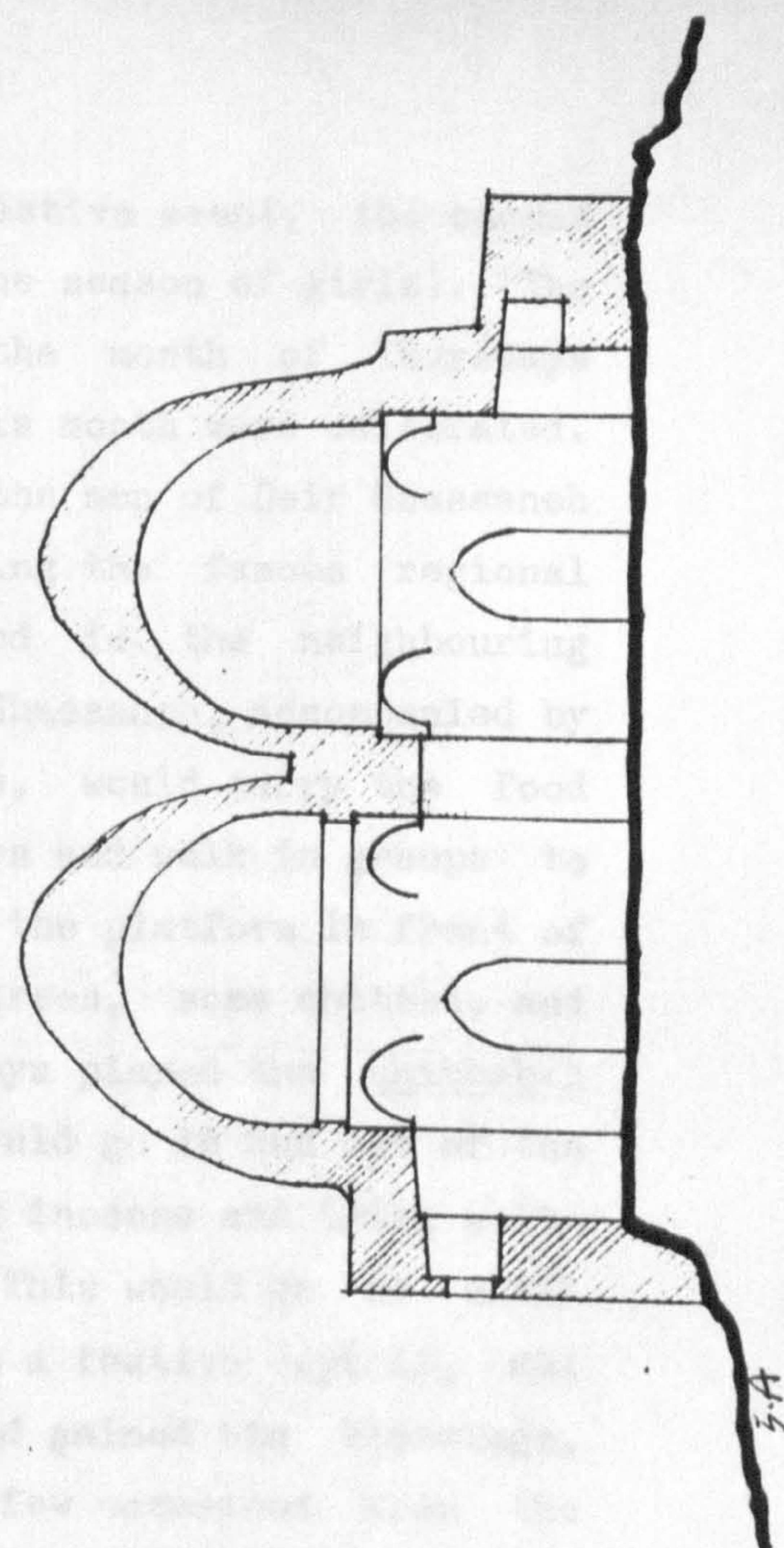
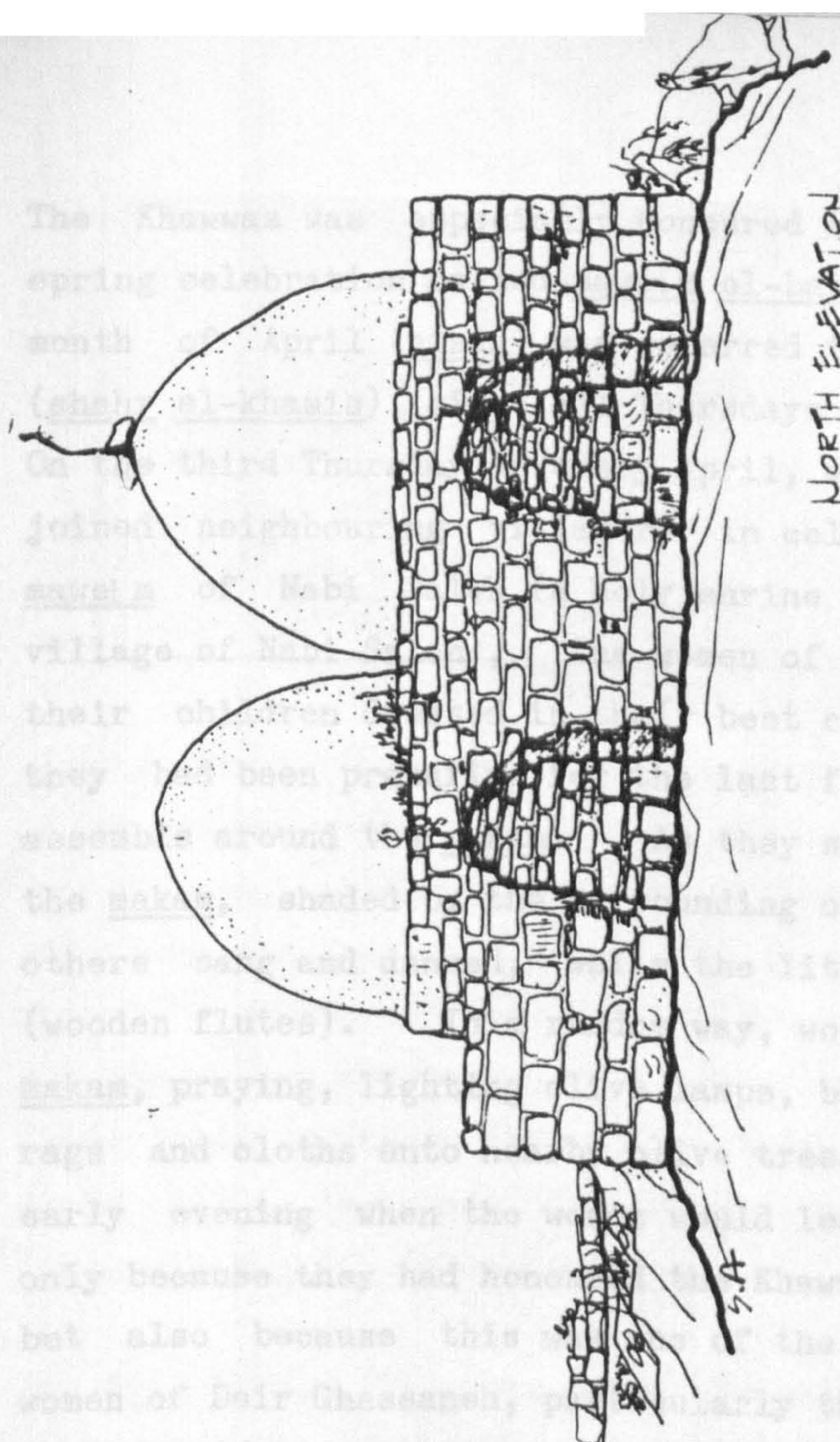
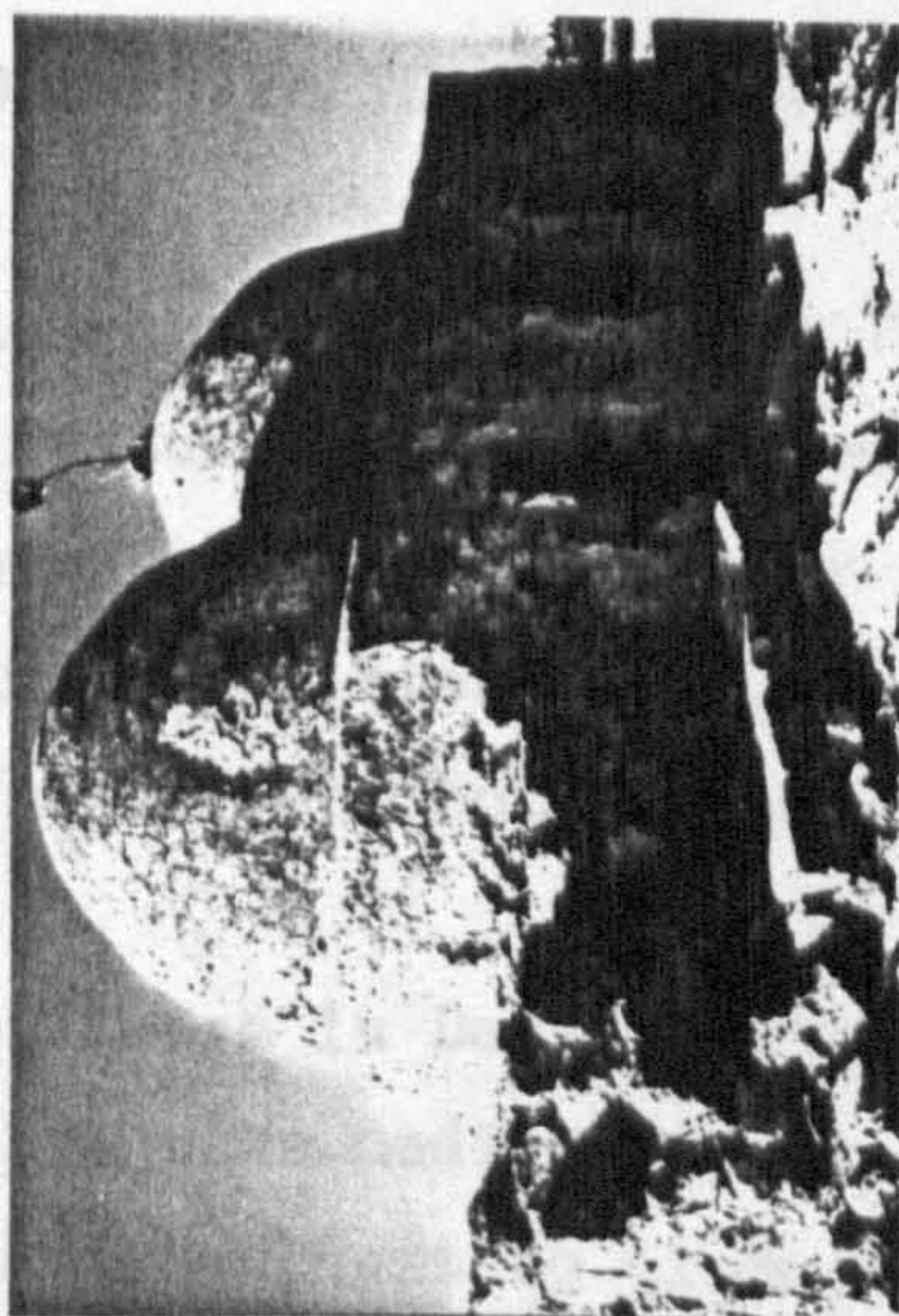
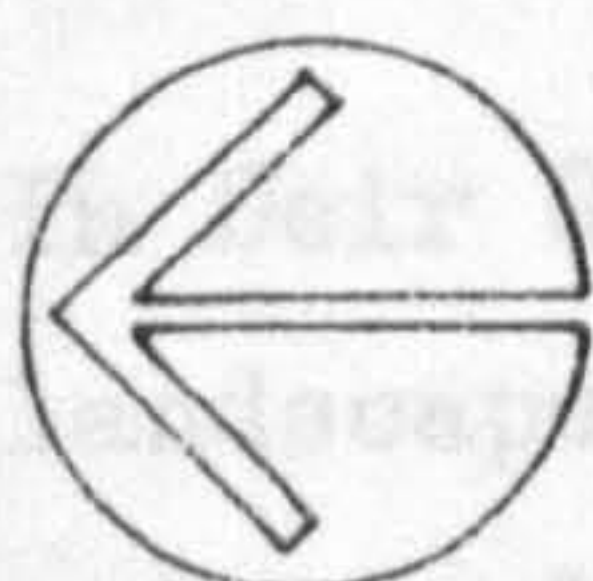
Thursday evenings, the month of Ramadan, and the night of Divine Decree (laylet el-qadr) were also considered sacred times to call upon the weli for special attention and personal assistance. Visitors to the Khawwas would often tie small rags on the gates or to tree branches around the makam. These were to remind the Khawwas of the visits that had been made and hence remind him to intercede on behalf of the visitors on the Day of Judgement. Stone-tokens i.e., piles of six or seven stones, were also packed on top of one another. These miniature pillars called kanatir or shawahed, can even be seen today around the shrine or on top of the shrine itself (Seeger, 1981: 192; Graham-Brown, 1980: 67; Wilson, 1908: 29). The idea behind these kanatir was similar to that of the tied rags; they were material witnesses.

The supernatural powers associated in the villager's eyes with the Khawwas played an important role a social function in the administration of village justice. In case of theft, for example, the Khawwas could intervene. The suspect would be brought into the makam and be asked to swear in the name of the Khawwas that he was innocent. It was strongly believed that if the suspect lied, the curse of the weli would rest upon him or her. The suspect's physical or mental ^{condition} would then deteriorate; death was also possible. In the case of dishonesty, the lintel (shashieh) of the door was likely to fall on the offender.

Fig. 68
Maqam Al-Khawwaṣ, Dier-Ghassaneh.

Surveyed 1985.

scale: 0 1 2M



The Khawwas was especially honoured by a festive event, the annual spring celebration called mawṣim el-banat (the season of girls). [The month of April (nisan) was referred to as the month of Thursdays (shahr el-khamis), since all Thursdays of this month were celebrated. On the third Thursday of every April, while the men of Deir Ghassaneh joined neighbouring villagers in celebrating the famous regional mawṣim of Nabi Saleh (a holy shrine located in the neighbouring village of Nabi Saleh), the women of Deir Ghassaneh, accompanied by their children dressed in their best clothes, would carry the food they had been preparing for the last few days and walk in groups to assemble around the makam. As they sat on the platform in front of the makam, shaded by the surrounding olive trees, some chatted, and others sang and danced, while the little boys played the shabbabeh (wooden flutes). In a random way, women would go in and out of the makam, praying, lighting olive lamps, burning incense and tying white rags and cloths onto nearby olive trees. This would go on until early evening when the women would leave in a festive spirit, not only because they had honoured the Khawwas and gained his blessings, but also because this was one of the very few occasions when the women of Deir Ghassaneh, particularly the Barghouthi women, were able to leave the restrictive boundaries of their homes and escape their daily routine and its drudgery.

SACRED LANDSCAPE FEATURES AND ARTIFACTS:

In Deir Ghassaneh, as in other Palestinian villages, many natural landscape features and artifacts were seen as possessing deep spiritual meanings. Particular trees, springs, caves, stone heaps, and certain localities were perceived as the place of supernatural powers and hence were both respected and feared.

A number of trees in Deir Ghassaneh derived sanctity from the saint to which they were dedicated. The olive grove around al-khawwas and the oak trees next to al-Majdoub and al-Rifa'i shrines, gained sanctity just by their proximity to the holy shrines.

The most honoured and revered tree in Deir Ghassaneh, the tree of



Fig.6.9: The tree of esh-sheikh Deeb

sheikh Berri, was never associated with a holy shrine. This tree, which unfortunately died a few years ago, was located to the north of the village, on the path to the village main spring ('ein ed-Deir) . This huge oak tree was honoured by the women of the village who made vows in its name and tied long white cloths (bafteh) to its branches. As the women approached it, they loudly recited verses from the Koran to drive demons away. When they became tired after work, they would sit in the shade of this tree to get some rest and at the same time gain barakeh (blessings).

The sidreh tree (*Zizyphus Spina Christi*), next to the sheikh 'Asfur shrine, was thought to be the abode of demons and hence was feared by the villagers. In cases of sickness, a relative of the ill person - usually a woman - would pile a few stones around the trunk, probably to prevent more djinn or spirits from leaving the tree to hurt the sick. Once the person was cured, the same person would take away the pile of stones and water the tree so as to pacify the spirits in it. (Women from the lower quarter, interview: 1985).

Not all kinds of trees were inhabited by djinn. They had their preferences. For example, carob and black fig trees seemed to be attractive to them (Cana'an; 1928: 162).

"It is thought that these trees are not only preferred by the demons as a home, but that they assemble [there] for time to time" (Cana'an; 1927: 36).

A few of the water springs surrounding Deir Ghassaneh were also believed to be inhabited by djinn and spirits. Certain attributes of the source of springs, such as their darkness and the fact that

they were deserted and in direct connection with the lower regions, made them attractive places for spirits to inhabit. A number of villagers from Deir Ghassaneh described their encounters with the guardian spirits of both the Abu Nayyak and the Jdedeh springs. (Um Nu'aman, Interview: 1985). 'Ain el Hajjar spring was also believed to have been inhabited by djinn. But contrary to Cana'an's remark that "springs, cisterns and all running waters are inhabited" (1922: 3), in Deir Ghassaneh only three out of the nine springs around the village were believed to be the abodes of djinn.

To the north of the village was a stone heap (rudjm) which was believed to be the abode of a'jam (saints who have common characteristics with demons). Unlike most haunted spots, which were more or less deserted, the courtyard of the devil (hosh esh-shaytan) was located in the living quarter of the Barghouthis. People believed that the Satan appeared there, mostly at night.

SACRED ARTIFACTS

In addition to the landscape features mentioned above, many other artifacts and practices were seen as either endowed with supernatural powers or embodying evil or good symbolic meanings.

The fallah resorted to those practices which he believed to be most effective in keeping demons and evil spirits from penetrating his living spaces or even his body. Such penetration he believed to be the cause of disasters, such as sickness, infertility or death.

It was, and still is, widely believed that the mere utterance of the name of Allah, the name of the prophet Mohammed, and Koranic verses, drive away evil spirits. Hence we often see the word Allah inscribed on the wall of holy shrines, on tomb-stones, and on the keystone of entry ways.

As noted above, white objects were perceived as barakeh (blessings). In addition to white walls and white cloths, white stones called shabbeh (alum) were also believed to be blessed, and hence were often

seen hung either on the interior walls of houses or on children's chests to protect them from the envious eye ('ain el hasood). The white shell of an egg was also hung on newly-constructed houses for the same purpose. Onion and garlic peels were also suspended on walls. Cana'an writes:

"The Palestinian believes that the gold of demons takes the shape of onion peel and their silver the shape of garlic peelings. People who were rewarded by the djinn used to disdain this apparently worthless gift and threw it away. They always regretted their mistake but too late" (Cana'an, 1928: 162).

Of course, most onion and garlic peelings were indeed thrown away, but on special occasions, such as the construction of a new house, onion and garlic peel were hung on the house door in order to pacify the djinn and prevent their entering the house.

The appearance of greenish light at dusk, or at night in certain locations, was a sign indicating that the site was inhabited by some good-natured superhuman power (Cana'an, 1927: 249). Holy men often appeared in their green garments. Tombs of holy saints were often covered with green cloths. Green branches of trees were also hung on doors indicating a desire for prosperity and peace.

Henna was, and continues to be, extensively used by the fallaheen both for cosmetic and decorative purposes. Henna was believed to have been used by Fatimah, the daughter of prophet Mohammad, and hence has acquired sanctity.

Below, I briefly refer to some "decorative" elements which acquired certain superstitious and symbolic meanings, pertaining to the driving away of demons. Many of these elements are still in use today.

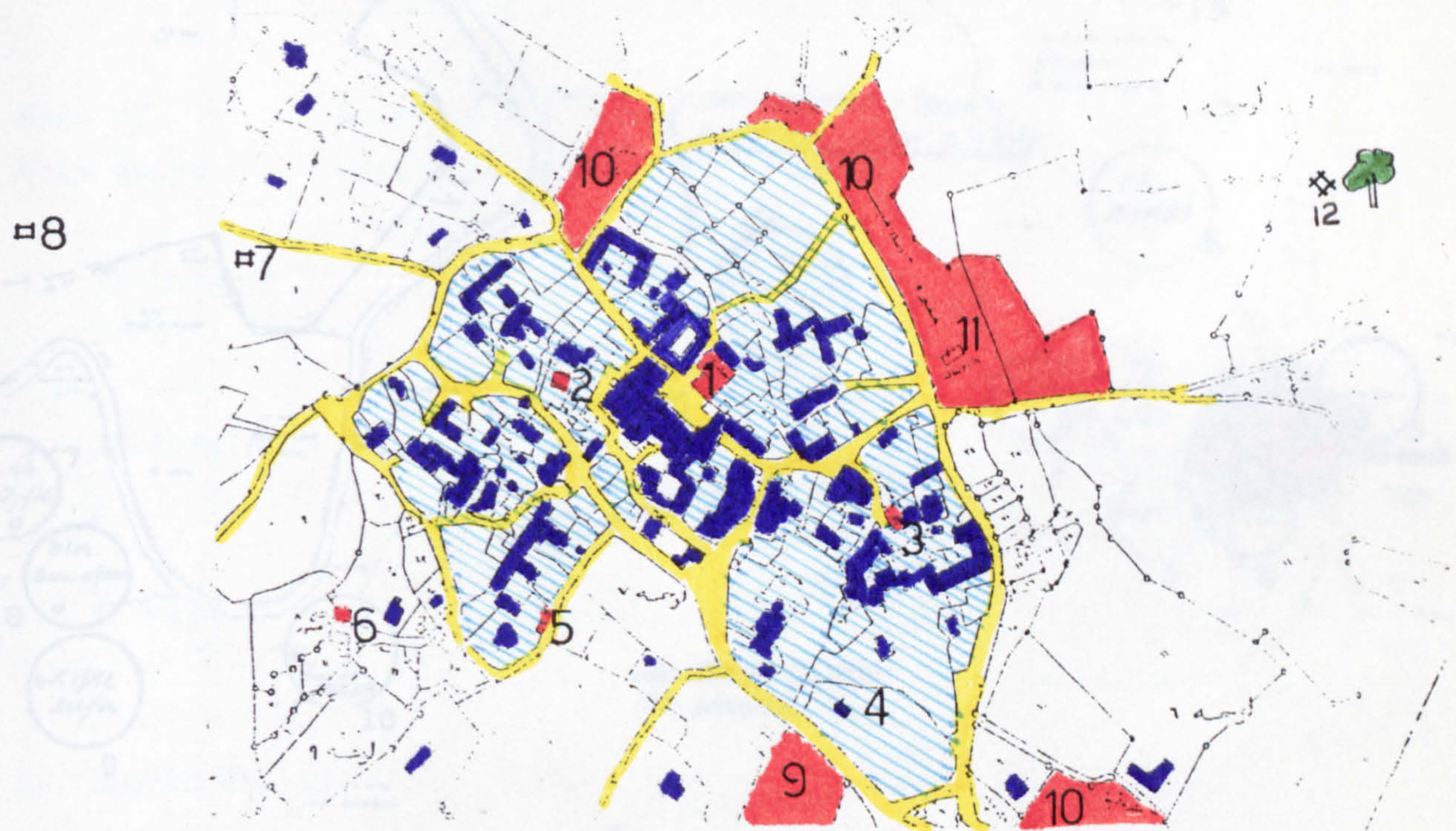
1. The hand of Fatimah or the hand of the Virgin Mary (Sitna Mariam) was commonly used and was often seen hung or drawn on interior walls.
2. Blue stones (kharazeh zarqa), and blue plates were also used.

The former was often seen hung on the hand of Fatimah, or as a blue stone by itself or often as blue beads. The latter was frequently seen placed on the door keystone or on the ceiling inside the house.

3. The palm tree, referred to as the tree of life (sadjaret el-hayah), was drawn on walls, mud bins (khawabi), or wooden doors; "Mohamadans believe that God created the palm tree from the clay which remained after the creation of man" (Cana'an, 1928: 153).
4. The serpent, which represented life, was also a common motif, drawn often on food storage bins (khawabi).
5. The wheat plant was another common motif: "All wheat grains are said still to bear the alef, the first letter of Allah" (Cana'an, 1928: 155).
6. Floral and faunal designs were often used in different places; house doors, keystones, etc. Some of these had symbolic values; others were decorative only (Cana'an, 1928 and Hanover 1922), (Fig. 6.10).
7. Entry doors, particularly thresholds (el-'atabeh) had highly symbolic meaning (chapter 4).
8. Sour dough (khamireh) as mentioned earlier, was stuck by the bride on the jamb of the house door so as to ensure fertility and prosperity for the newly-wed.

These items are some of the artifacts which have had superstitions associated with them, and which might be passed by unnoticed if one were not aware of their meanings for this culture.

FIG. 6.10 : THE VILLAGE SACRED ENVIRONMENT



■ The Location of "Sacred" Features located in the village.

■ Built-up areas.

■ Open areas.

1. The village mosque
2. Esh Sheikh Matar (*Makam*)
3. Esh Sheikh Khalaf (tomb)
4. Esh Sheikh El'Atari (tomb)
5. El Habil (tomb)
6. Esh Sheikh 'Asfur (*Makam*)
7. Esh Sheikh Ghaith (tomb)
8. Esh Sheikh Shahadeh (tomb)
9. Hakel el 'Abid (The Slaves fields)
10. Villages three cemeteries
11. Esh Sheikh Khalid (*Makam*)
12. Esh Sheikh Dib (Olive tree)
13. Ed-Dasouki (Olive tree next to a cave)

THE SACRED ENVIRONMENT outside the village built area

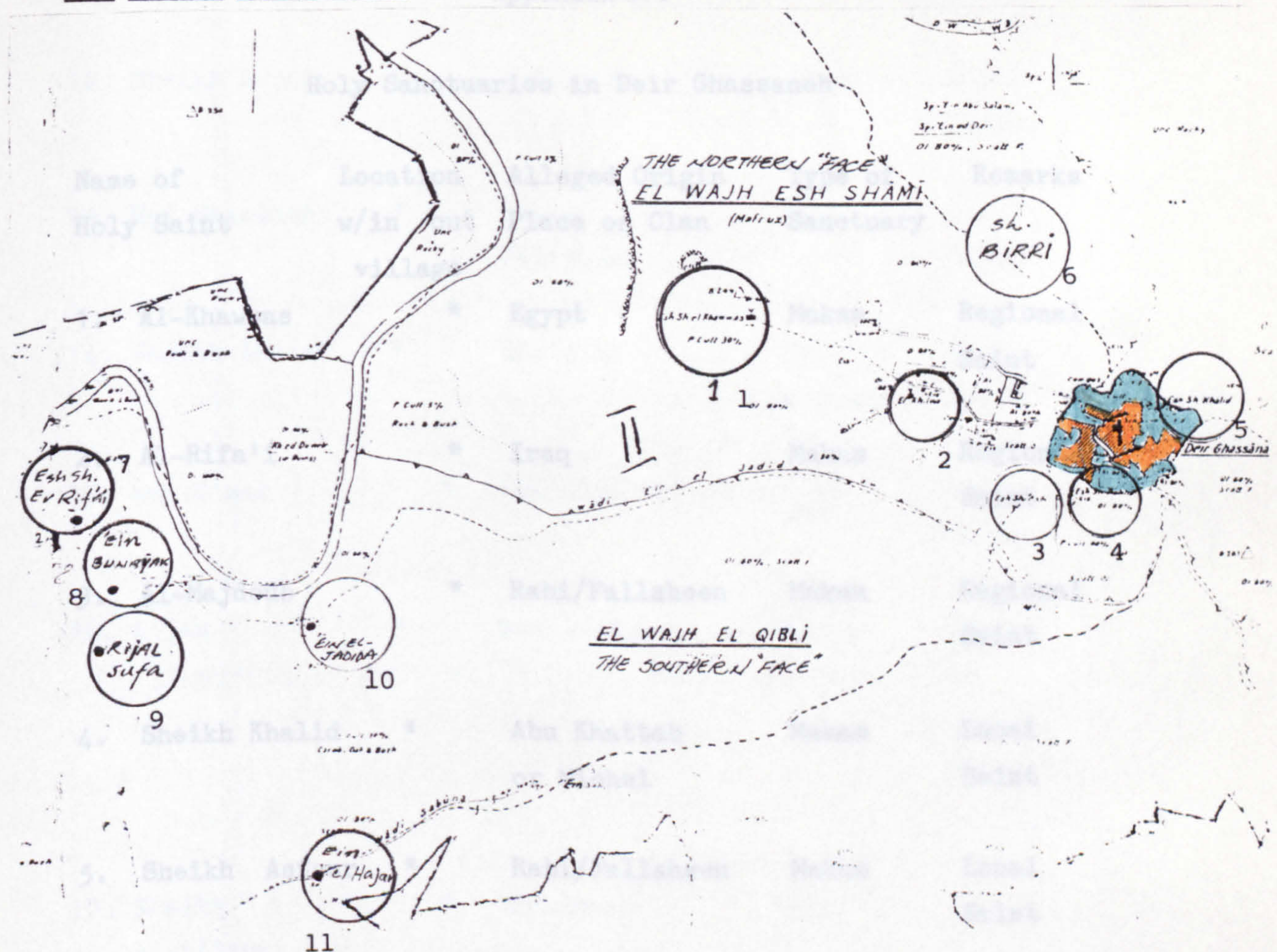


Fig. 6.11: Map showing the locations of "sacred" elements located outside the village built-up area.

1. Esh sheikh al-Khawwas (makam)
2. El-Khulwa (Esh sheikh Abdullah) (makam)
3. Esh sheikh 'Asfur (makam)
4. Esh sheikh Rahhal (tomb)
5. Esh sheikh Khalid (makam)
6. Sheikh Berri (tree)
7. Esh sheikh Er-Rifa'i (makam and an oak tree)
8. Ein Bunayak (haunted spring)
9. Rijal Sufa (makam el-Majdoub and an oak tree)
10. Ein el Jdedeh (haunted spring)
11. Ein el Hajjar (haunted spring)

Appendix 6.I

Holy Sanctuaries in Deir Ghassaneh

Name of Holy Saint	Location w/in out village	Alleged Origin Place or Clan	Type of Sanctuary	Remarks
1. Al-Khawwas	*	Egypt	Makam	Regional Saint
2. Al-Rifa'i	*	Iraq	Makam	Regional Saint
3. Al-Majdoub	*	Rabi/Fallaheen	Makam	Regional Saint
4. Sheikh Khalid	*	Abu Khattab or Mishel	Makam	Local Saint
5. Sheikh Asfour	*	Rabi/Fallaheen	Makam	Local Saint
6. Sheikh Abdullah	*	Dawood/ Barghouthi	Makam + cave	Local Saint
7. El-Habil	*	Mansour/ Fallaheen	Tomb	Local Saint
8. Sheikh Rahal		Not known	Tomb	Local Saint
9. Sheikh Geith		Not known	Tomb	Local Saint
10. Sheikh Matar	*	Dawood/ Barghouthi	Makam	Local Saint
11. Sheikh Deeb	*	Not known	Tomb	Local

				Saint
12. Sheikh Berri	*	Not known	Tomb	Local Saint
13. Haj Shahadeh	*	Rabi/ Fallahdeen	Tomb	Local Saint
14. Sheikh Khalaf	*	Shu'aibi	Tomb in a house	Clan Saint
15. Haj E'mar	*	Shu'aibi	Tomb	Clan Saint
16. A'jam	*	Not known	Stone heap	Feared by people, specially at night
17. Sheikh el-'Atiri	*	Not known	Tomb	
18. Sheikh el-Dasoki	*	Shu'aibi	Cave	

Source: Author's fieldnotes

Appendix 6.II

Muslim Villages in the Central Highlands of Palestine in which a Village Mosque was Located 1880s

No.	Name of Village	Description of the Survey
1	'Akrabeh	A mosque in the east part of the village founded on the remains of a Christian church
2	'Arrabeh	A small mosque in the centre
3	Beit Ta'mir	Small mosque named after the khalif Omar
4	Deir esh sheikh	On the east a small mosque with a large dome and a second smaller
5	El-Haram 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim	A mosque on the west
6	El-Tor	Church of Ascension, now a mosque
7	Jam	A little mosque on high grounds
8	Jemmala	A little mosque on high grounds
9	Jibilieh	Fine ruined mosque
10	Kurawa Ibn Hassan	Little mosque of sheikh 'Aly
11	Lubban	A little mosque
12	Naby Saleh	A little mosque

- | | | |
|----|------------|-----------------|
| 13 | Nein/Neim | A little mosque |
| 14 | Umm Saffah | A little mosque |

Source: Compiled by the author from Conder and Kitchener (1881)

Appendix 6.III

Christian Villages in the Central Highlands of Palestine
in which a village church was Located
1880s

No.	Name of Village	Description from the Survey
1.	'Ain 'Arik	Greek Church
2.	Beit Jemal	A Latin convent was found in process of construction
3.	Bir Zeit	Greek and Latin churches with red tiles
4.	Burkin	Greek Christian/small modern church
5.	El-Khudar	A Greek church and convent in the village
6.	Jifna	Latin church - Latin convent
7.	Bireh	A chapel venerated by Muslims, named after Virgin Mary
8.	Ramallah	A Greek church - Latin convent - Protestant school
9.	Sha'fat	Sacred chapel of Sultan Ibrahim in the village

Source: compiled by the author from Conder and Kitchener (1881)

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF PART ONE

In part one I discussed the different environmental levels in the spatial ecology of nineteenth century Palestine in a descending order: from the settlement level to that of households objects. I attempted to show how each one of these levels (settlements, sheikhdом, village, living quarters and dwellings) was organized by different rules that determined their boundaries. These boundaries were well marked and protected by homogeneous groups that occupied the different levels.

The rules that determined the boundaries of these levels of the spatial order were closely associated with the existing social forms. This is only expected in a society characterized by relative social stability, autarky and the prevalence of traditional behavioural patterns.

At the settlements level, the relationship among the three communities: town dwellers, village dwellers and Bedouin was crucial in the demarcation of the three spheres of control. The scarcity of fertile lands and other ecological factors (aridity, altitudes, locations) also influenced patterns of settlement dispersion.

In the central highlands, the heartland of Palestinian peasantry, the divisions between the two rural peasant factions, Qais and Yemen, and the political and the economic powers of the potentates of the central highlands (shuyoukh el-nawahi) divided the area into power domains (sheikhdoms). Each sheikhdom included a number of villages with its own throne village (kariet kursi) symbolizing the power and the prestige of the sheikhdom as a whole. Hence defence was a crucial factor in the siting of most throne villages.

Each village in the sheikhdom was more or less self-contained. Agricultural fields separated the different villages from one another, creating an isolated and dispersed pattern of settlements.

The agricultural fields, which were free of man-made structures (except for storage houses (kusur)), the belts of empty lots around the village (hawakir), and the backs of buildings; all created distinct boundaries which separated these villages from one another.

Being the throne village of Bani Zaid sheikhdum, Deir Ghassaneh, was characterized by a distinct system of social stratification. The dominant social and spatial feature was the division between the dominant Barghouthi clans and the subordinate fallaheen (non-Barghouthis by definition).

The political and social dominance of the Barghouthis represented by their sheikh, the semi-feudal potentate of the region, was reflected in the centrality of Deir Ghassaneh in relation to villages around it, in the centrality of the plaza (including the sheikh's dwelling) in relation to the rest of the village, and in the prominence of the Barghouthi quarter in relation to the rest of the fallaheen quarters, as well as in the elaborate semi-urban forms of their architecture in comparison to the simple fallaheen built forms.

The social structure was one in which the basic social units at the village level were clearly defined by the principles of kinship and patronage. Role expectations were embedded in rank status and gender divisions. Those in turn corresponded to specific units of spatial allocations. The allocation of village space was greatly influenced by a hierarchical system of control. Patronage and patriarchy determined the control of wealth by men, and the division of labour along gender lines.

Within each quarter and within each household, patriarchal control of the heads of households over their married sons and their womenfolk and children was replicated in the mode of control exercised by the sheikh over all other clans within a hierarchical system of patronage.

This system of control dictated the most dominant feature of the village built space: a hierarchal spatial order of separation and differentiation based along kinship and gender lines.

The ideology of geneology (i.e., belonging to the same ancestor) was the determinant factor in maintaining this hierarchical spatial order. Both the village built-up area and the village fields could be seen as systems of geneological spaces. The caste-like separation between the Barghouthis and the fallaheen was reinforced both by the physical separation of their living quarters (harat) and ultimately by the rule of exogamy. The further hierarchical segmentation of the harah into courtyard dwellings (ahwash) and individual houses (dur) was based on closer kinship ties.

Attitudes towards privacy and seclusion affected the nature of the boundaries that marked the different geneological spaces. While in the case of the Barghouthis the line separating the outside public world from the inner private world was drawn close to the front door of each Barghouthi dwelling, the lines of separation in peasant dwellings was drawn at the quarter level. In both cases the law of mahram (individuals that are not eligible as spouses) dictated rules of interactions and movements at the house level. While the law of mahram was an overarching principle for most of the Barghouthi women, extending beyond the high walls of their compounds, for most of the fallaheen women, who mingled relatively freely with men working in the fields, the law of mahram ceased to operate outside the walls of their homes.

Within the different geneological spaces, a hierarchical order of gender separation existed. However gender separation was subordinated to kinship separation, thus reflecting the status of women in relation to men. The village built space could be seen as segments of male and female domains. While most of women's domains were defined within kinship spheres, men's domains extended beyond their own living quarters.

The differential status and role between the Barghouthi and the fallaheen women reflected itself in the definition of most Barghouthi male and female domains. While most Barghouthi women considered their homes as their domain, the majority of the fallaheen women extended their domain to the level of the harah, were they moved freely, as well as the village fields (men's domain) where they travelled daily

to the village spring and undertook specific agricultural tasks.

However the hierarchy of the system should not be overdrawn. This was neither a feudal system (in the European sense), nor a caste-system (in the Indian sense). Patronage at best defined the relations between Barghouthis and fallaheen heads of clans, the ultimate dominance of men over ~~women~~ and the centrality (but not the omnipotence) of the Barghouthis.

The same holds true of kinship separation. The separation between clan quarters was not hermetical and was often "violated" by the social interactions and the egalitarian bonds of village solidarity creating pressure towards ideological homogeneity.

As noted earlier, a network of village inter-kin solidarity was reinforced through a shared culture and religious heritage, through the collective imposition of tax burdens, and through the communal coordination dictated by patterns of land ownership and cropping arrangements.

Spatially, the peasants of Deir Ghassaneh expressed their unity by creating centres of activities that cut partially or totally across kinship lines. As we have seen earlier, the village plaza, guest-house, mosque and village fields brought together men of the different clans on a daily basis. The village spring brought together most of the village women. Shared inter-kin utilities such as olive presses, threshing floors, local shops, and cemeteries brought together neighbouring kin groups. The sacred environment of the village acted as an egalitarian force, most immediately for the unity of the village muslim community, and ultimately for the integration of the village into a larger world, that of the community of the faithful (umat al-muslimeen).

However when the autarkic nature of the village spatial organisation began to lose its isolation as a result of the influence of market forces, state intervention, and migration-- the internal forces of the village hierarchy and the close correspondence between social structures and spatial formations were ready to disintegrate.

PART II

TRADITION AND CHANGE

The Case of The Built-Environment

INTRODUCTION

The visitor to Deir Ghassaneh today will see a very different picture from that described in part I. In the following, I look at the new face of the village in an attempt to examine the nature of the changes that took place in the village way of life and in its built environment during the past seventy years (1916-1986).

The turn of this century brought about radical transformations in the socio-economic conditions as well as the cultural values of the community of Deir Ghassaneh. Here I will view the changes in the traditional built form as part of the change in several other traditional patterns: kinship relations, power relations, work processes, and behavioural patterns. Because of the complexity in the process of change, a one-to-one correspondence between the change in the built environment and that of other spheres will be avoided. The consequential or causal relation between change in the built environment and changes in aspects of daily life in the village were in most cases neither easily noticeable, nor always directly connected. For example, new patterns of housing dispersion and critical changes in the existing patterns of spatial relations are seen here as having been brought about by a chain of interdependent structural transformations involving privatisation of land tenure relations, changes in the organisation of the agricultural labour process, marginalisation of agricultural activities, emigration of male family members and nucleisation of the extended family.

Natural versus disruptive change

The relative social stability characterizing the village of Deir Ghassaneh during the second half of the nineteenth century is not meant to suggest here that the village was free from internal or

external tensions. On the contrary, as discussed earlier (chapter 2), the village of Deir Ghassaneh was ridden with perennial conflicts between the Bani Zaid Sheikhdome and other neighbouring Sheikhdoms, wars between the two fallahene factions (Qais and Yemen), and feuds between the different village clans or members of the same clan.

However, all of these conflicts were essential components of the prevailing "system" ; their structural consequence was to reinforce the status quo, resulting in continuous adjustments of the different aspects of village life with a stable pattern. It was the nature of these modifications that made the present and the future bear a close resemblance to the past, hence enhancing a sense of normative stability and continuity in community life.

In the process of this 'natural' change, the culture as a whole was able to retain some measure of autonomy. The community was capable of controlling a process of selection by which new forms or new techniques were adapted. This selectivity operated in such a way that certain innovations found a place within the old fabric. The most important characteristic of this kind of change was that conflicts and tensions were accommodated within the existing normative order. Such changes neither presented substantial threats nor offered real challenges to the structure of the existing institutions. Hence there was no sense that anything essential had been renounced. Consequently, the chain of transmission of traditional patterns and norms remained unbroken.

One can argue that the essence of such change was that it did not affect the village structure, whether socially or physically.

An Inwardly-Looking Community

Until the turn of this century, the community in Deir Ghassaneh had very limited transactions with the regional or world market. Land was the main source of livelihood and status. The community retained a system of agricultural subsistence, employing simple agricultural technology. The village as a whole and not the

individual was considered the unit of taxation by the state. The community had patriarchal households; the extended family acting as the main unit of production and consumption. Labour was divided along clear gender lines.

Like most other villages in the central highlands, Deir Ghassaneh enjoyed a relative independence from the Ottoman central government. Its sheikh (who was also the sheikhdome's tax farmer) enjoyed extensive political powers. Political alliances within the village, and outside of it, were vertical and factional i.e., based on clan identity as opposed to class (Tamari, 1982). Kinship played a major role both in political alliances and economic organisation. The village's religious and ritual practices were an integral part of the community's everyday life. The village religion was centered on local saints and cosmology rather than on national Islamic institutions. The "unconscious" or "unthinking" acceptance of an inherited belief system could be retained as long as the community was isolated from the world around it, and as long as the penetration of 'external' ideas were contained within the existing structure.

DISRUPTIVE CHANGE

By the turn of this century, the community of Deir Ghassaneh was increasingly faced with pressures caused primarily by its exposure to external forces, namely Ottoman land reforms, British colonial policies, and later Zionist colonisation. These foreign forces challenged the traditional patterns of the community.

The criticality of change depended on the nature and intensity of the challenge. If pressures allowed, new patterns appeared while traditional patterns were still maintained. However, in any community there will always be limits as to the degree and kind of cultural changes which can be absorbed within the old fabric. After a hypothetical "breaking point", the pressures caused by the nature and rapidity of changes result in the collapse of traditional patterns, without the assimilation of the new in the old structure.

In the case of Deir Ghassaneh, the critical point of disruption in the traditional structure was reached when three factors came into play, namely the declining powers of the village sheikh, changes in the land tenure and taxation systems, and changes in the occupational structure. These three factors worked together to produce and transform the built environment of the village community.

I. The Declining Powers of the Sheikh

The Ottoman land reforms discussed below had the direct consequence of undermining the powers which the sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh - together with other highlands sheikhs - enjoyed for centuries. The Ottoman government, and later the British Mandate, started to shift their alliance from the village sheikh to powerful urban notables. The sheikhs' private armies were slowly dissolved; their judicial powers passed from them to newly appointed village notables, the makhatir. These makhatir (sing. mukhtar) were appointed by the British government to represent the village, more specifically the different clans within the village. Now the village may have two or three makhatir representing it, all lacking the political and the economic power that the village sheikh once had (Baer, 1980:103). The sheikhs were also stripped of their powers as tax-farmers, as these powers were given to urban notables, usually on an auction basis. As a result, the villagers no longer depended on the protection of their sheikh and his private army, but were dependent on absentee landlords, primarily urban leaders whose power reached out from their towns to a whole network of villages.

Consequently, the sheikhdom lost its status as a relatively independent entity. Villagers started to belong to a larger unit, and were eventually tied with centres of powers located outside the scope of their own sheikhdom. The village entered new relations with townships around them. These relations eventually involved the village in national politics as opposed to traditional local politics. The role played by Deir Ghassaneh as a throne village of Bani Zaid sheikhdom declined and consequently the power and status of the dominant Barghouthi clans waned.

II. Changes in Land Tenure

The Ottoman land reforms (tanzimat) which aimed at changing communal (village or clan) ownership of land to private ownership, started as early as 1858 (Ma'oz, 1968). However such reforms were fully effected only during the British Mandate. As a result of these reforms, the village tax responsibilities (el-'ushur, the tenth) became an individual responsibility. The change in forms of land tenure in the long run resulted in the creation of big absentee landlords and the deprivation of smaller peasants of their lands (Graham-Brown, 1982). In many areas of rural Palestine, although not necessarily in Deir Ghassaneh, this meant the demise of communal holdings in land (musha') in favour of private ownership (whether by landlord or peasant).

As a result of the above changes the village subsistence crops gave way to cash crops (Scholch, 1982), resulting in a decline in the village autarky and self-sufficiency. This development eventually resulted in the integration of the village economy in the regional and world economy and hence the commoditisation of the village crops. The collapse of the subsistence agricultural system, along with other developments, resulted in the migration of village residents to seek work in urban centres (Migdal, 1980: 24-32). The village no longer depended primarily upon agriculture as the means of subsistence, and this weakened the peasant's "organic" attachment to the land.

In the particular case of Deir Ghassaneh, communal land holdings were weaker than elsewhere in the highlands due to the dominant impact of the Barghouthis - nevertheless the marginalisation of agricultural land that was generated by privatisation and work opportunities outside the village had the same consequences it did elsewhere: the village ceased to be a self-enclosed unit whose subsistence and hierarchies were shaped within the village community and its agricultural land. Wage labour, markets, urban jobs and cash linked the village to a network of forces which increasingly integrated it into a world whose centre of gravity was the city, and whose frame of reference was the nation.

III. Changes in the Occupational Structure

The 1920s marked the beginnings of change in the occupational structure of the village community. Land, which was up until then the only source of livelihood for the community, was being slowly replaced by other sources of income and status. Job opportunities inside and outside the village were slowly increasing. By the mid thirties, twenty-four of the villagers had become government official employees, either as school teachers or policemen. Around the same period, some 20-30 villagers became wage labourers in a new lime factory owned by a European settler in the coastal village of Magdal Sadik. By the nineteen forties, the number of employees (teachers, policemen and wage labourers) was over a hundred (Abu Hani and Abu Adnan; Interviews: 1986). The 1950s marked the beginnings of villagers' emigration to Saudi Arabia to work with the Arab-American Oil Company (ARAMCO). In addition to access to cash resources, being an employee, particularly a school teacher, was more prestigious than remaining a peasant. Status was attached to education and wage employment. Through these new wage earners and emigrants, the community was brought into contact with the world around it.

CRITICAL CHANGES IN THE VILLAGE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Since the beginning of the British Mandate in 1918, the built environment in Deir Ghassaneh, as in other villages, was drastically transformed. There have been two phases of construction, the first occurred between the 1920s and the mid-fifties. New buildings constructed in this period bore a great resemblance to traditional building patterns and were in general accommodated within the old structure (Fig.II.1). In the second period, after 1955, the new structures (Fig. II.2) brought with them the embryonic formation of a new spatial organisation which reflected the re-organisation of the community on new basis.

Below I examine some aspects of the new patterns of spatial relations and organisation:

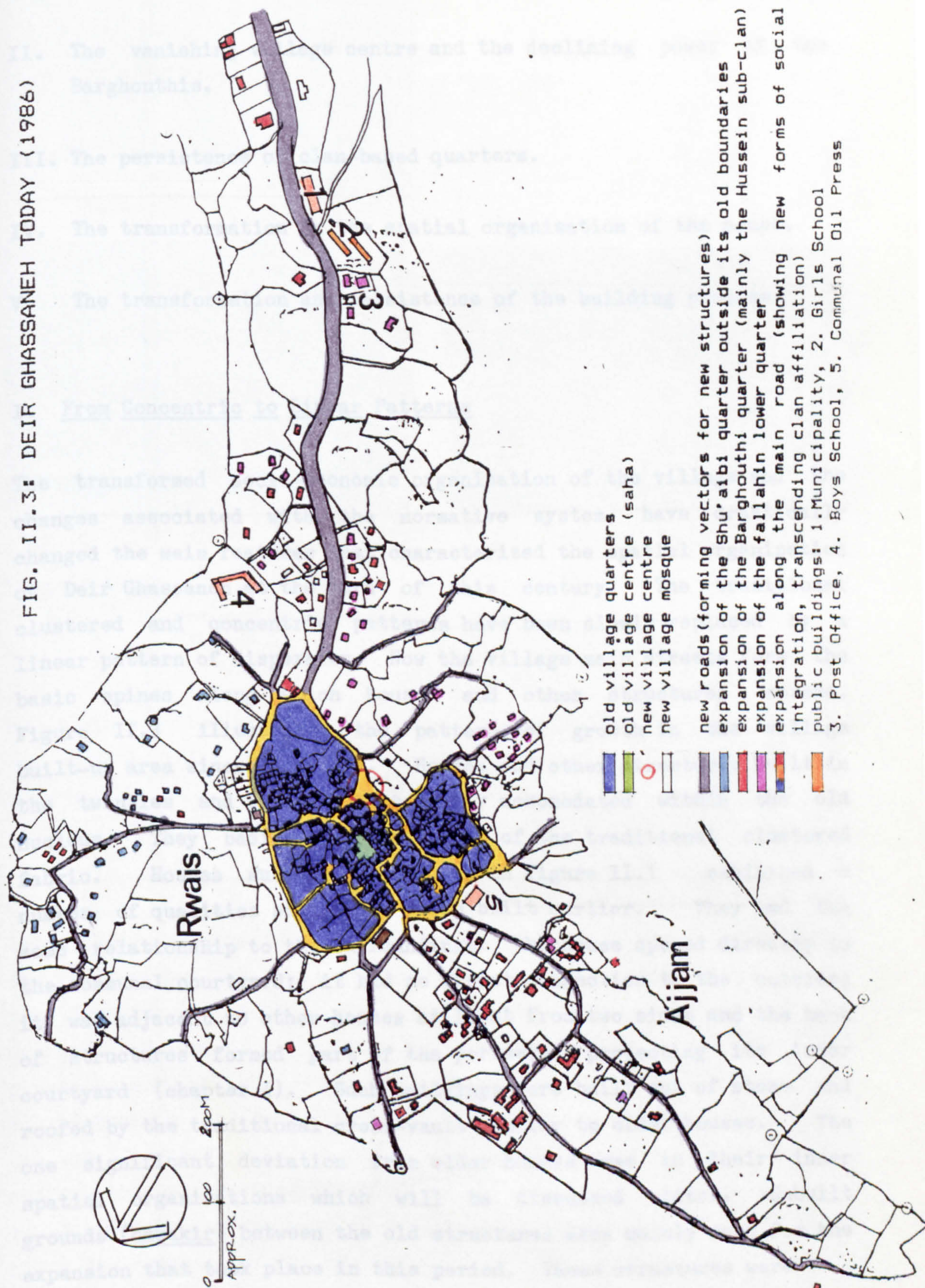


Fig. II.1: Buildings constructed between 1920-1950 resembled the traditional patterns.



Fig. II.2: Buildings constructed after 1950 reflect the reorganisation of the community on new basis.

FIG. 11.3: DEIR GHASSANEH TODAY (1986)



- I. The transformation from a clustered to a linear pattern of dispersion.
- II. The vanishing village centre and the declining power of the Barghouthis.
- III. The persistence of clan-based quarters.
- IV. The transformation in the spatial organisation of the house.
- V. The transformation and persistence of the building process.

I. From Concentric to Linear Patterns

The transformed socio-economic organisation of the village and the changes associated with the normative system, have drastically changed the main features that characterized the spatial organisation of Deir Ghassaneh at the turn of this century. The traditional clustered and concentric patterns have been slowly replaced by a linear pattern of dispersion. Now the village main streets form the basic spines along which houses and other structures spread. Figure II.3 illustrates the pattern of growth in the village built-up area since the 1920s. Houses and other structures built in the twenties and thirties were mostly accommodated within the old nucleus. They basically formed part of the traditional clustered fabric. Houses such as those shown in figure II.1 exhibited a number of qualities similar to those built earlier. They had the same relationship to the surroundings: the house opened directly to the communal courtyard; it had no direct connection to the outside; it was adjacent to other houses at least from two sides and the back of structures formed part of the perimeter protecting its inner courtyard (chapter 4). Such buildings were built out of stone and roofed by the traditional cross-vault similar to older houses. The one significant deviation from older houses was in their inner spatial organisations which will be discussed later. Unbuilt grounds (hawakir) between the old structures were mainly used for the expansion that took place in this period. These structures were



a.



b.



c.

Fig. II.4: a) new school built in 1925 b) olive press in between old structures c) new house replacing an old one

built in a number of ways: adjacent to old structures (such as the new school built in 1925 next to the guest-house), in between old houses (eg. new olive-presses 1927); on top of old structures, or replacing them (Fig. II.4).

The 1930s witnessed the breaking away of some structures from the traditional architectural fabric into a loose pattern of dispersion. The first structures built outside the old nucleus were the houses of the Hussein (Barghouthi) sub-clans and the house of sheikh Abdul Rahman el-Halabi (Fig. II.5). The Hussein family, who were the first to move out of the old village nucleus, came from the village of al-Mzeir'a and built their new houses to the northwest of the village, hence forming the first new quarter. Abdul Rahman el Halabi who was the village Alem (learned man), was the first school teacher to be appointed by the British Mandate as a formal teacher. He built his house outside the village in 1933.



fig. II.5: Some houses built in the 1930s broke away from the old village nucleus

The most prominent aspect of dispersion since the 1950s has been linearity along village streets. Linear patterns of dispersion and the accomodation of new structures within the old core went hand in hand, with the former pattern becoming more dominant since the 1950 (Fig. II.3). Since then the village main streets and not the village plaza (saha) have become the centres of activities and the axes of expansion.

II. The Vanishing Centre

The village centre (containing the plaza, guest-house, the mosque, and the sheikh's dwellings) has gradually lost its important function as the focus of village unity. Since the 1920s this focal point, which at one point gathered the different physical and social constituents of the village, cut across all kinship lines, and was the main domain for male activities, started to lose the basis for its predominant role.

The death of Sheikh Mahmoud in 1919 marked the end of power for village sheikhs in general. Consequently, the Barghouthis' position - particularly that of the Saleh family - started to decline, while the powers of the village makhatir (clan representatives during the British Mandate) started to rise. In the same year, the colonial government appointed four makhatir, all from the Barghouthi sub-clans, hence decentralizing the traditional powers of the village sheikh.

After the death of Sheikh Mahmoud, the Saleh dwelling (discussed at length in chapter 4) lost its role and ceased to be the symbol of power and prestige for the throne village of Deir Ghassaneh. Today the Saleh dwelling is almost deserted except for 'Adli, the grandson of sheikh Mahmoud, and his widowed mother.

In 1920 the communal guest-house also lost its functional role and prestigious status. The building was transformed into a village school. Later on, in 1930, the guest-house was replaced by four clan-based guest-houses (dawawin) (Fig. II.6). The Daher, the Dawood, the Rabi and the Shu'aibi, each had its own separate guest-house located in its own quarter. Hence the one unifying centre of activities was replaced by four secondary centres of activities. Today only the Dawood guest-house is still serving its former function. The rest ceased to exist in the 1970s.

The old mosque continued to be in use up till 1982, when it was replaced by the new village mosque built outside the Barghouthi quarter, hence symbolizing the demise of their power. The new



a.



b.



c.

Fig.II.6: Clan-based guest-houses replaced the single unifying centre
 a) the Dawood guest-house b) the Lower quarter guest-house
 c) interior of lower quarter guest-house



Fig. II.7: The village new mosque located outside the village centre

mosque (Fig. II.7) the Princess Zuhra mosque, carries the name of its Kuwaiti donor, reflecting the externally-oriented relations that the villagers of Deir Ghassaneh have with the world today. The old village mosque has been used as a kindergarten for the last four years.

As the old centre of the village lost its functional role and meaning, a new village centre has appeared to replace the old one (Fig. II.8). This new male gathering point is located next to the village main "commercial centre". The village main shop, two billiard saloons, a chicken shop, and a coffee-shop form the boundary of the new centre. In contrast with the well-contained introverted old village centre, the new centre is located along the main road, which connects the village to the world outside.

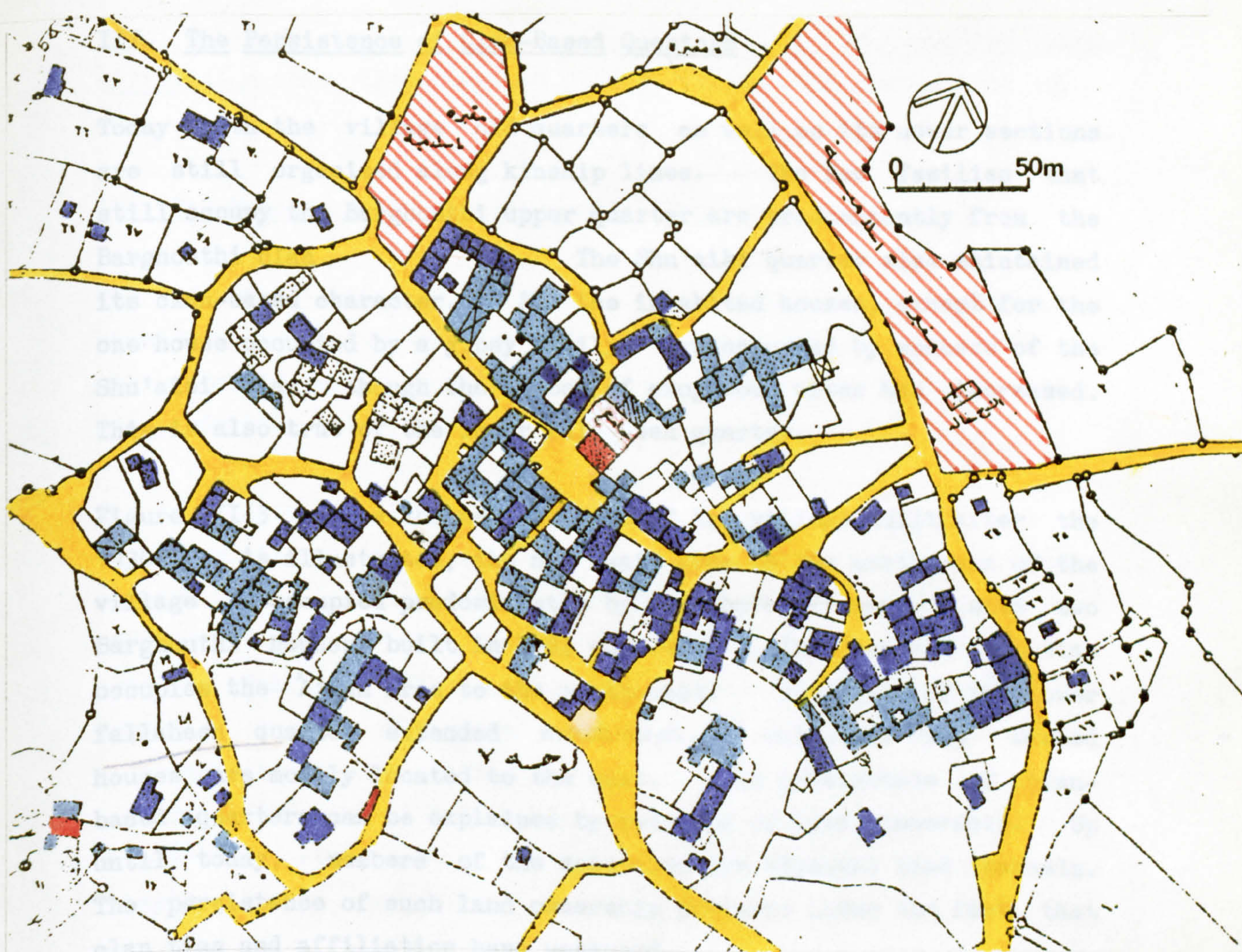


Fig. II.8: The new village centre located along the main road

With the decline of the old village centre, the whole "traditional" nucleus of the village has also gradually lost its importance. As figure II.9 illustrates, most of the village old quarters, particularly the Barghouthi quarter, are extensively run down and physically dilapidated. Today, most parts of the old village are deserted in favour of the newer sections along the main roads (fig. II.10). Data gathered from the field show that the old part of the village houses older age groups and the poorer section of the village population. Today the old core is associated with tradition and poverty while the new sections are associated with modernity and wealth.



Fig. II.9: Today most village old quarters are delapidated



- deserted houses
- inhabited houses
- religious endowment (waqf)

Fig. II.10: Old village quarters are being deserted in favour of new sections

III. The Persistence of Clan-Based Quarters

Today both the village old quarters as well as its newer sections are still organized along kinship lines. The few families that still occupy the Barghouthi upper quarter are predominantly from the Barghouthi clan.

The Shu'aibi quarter also maintained its clan-based character. All the inhabited houses, except for the one house occupied by a gipsy family, are occupied by members of the Shu'aibi clan, though the number of exogamous wives has increased. This is also true of the lower fallaheen quarter.

Figure II.3 shows the new sections of the village built after the 1930s. As illustrated, the new Rwaia area to the north-east of the village is occupied predominantly by the Shu'aibi clan, with two Barghouthi houses built in 1984 and 1986. The Hussein sub-clan occupies the 'Ajjam area to the north-west. Residents of the lower fallaheen quarter extended south-west, while the new Dawood houses are mostly located to the west. The persistence of clan-based quarters can be explained by patterns of land ownership. Up until today, members of the same clan own adjacent land parcels. The persistence of such land ownership patterns hides the fact that clan ties and affiliation have weakened.

Social Integration Amongst the Different Clans

In addition to the clan-based divisions, Deir Ghassaneh has been witnessing the appearance of a new pattern of dispersion based on business interests, market relations and perhaps the embryonic class formations. This is exhibited in the location of new houses and public buildings along the main road which connects the village of Deir Ghassaneh with the neighbouring village of Beit Rima. Houses built along this road belong to the different clans (fig. II.3). The expansion along this road is quite recent; most houses have been built in the 1970s and 1980s. This main road also include a number of public buildings such as the girls school, the boys secondary school, and the new municipality building (1986) which belong to the twin villages of Deir Ghassaneh and Beit Rima. Unlike the rest of the village quarters - both old and new - dispersion along the main

road exhibits new forms of social integration transcending clan affiliation that characterized village living quarters up till then.

IV. The Transformation in the Spatial Organisation of the House

The essence of change in the spatial organisation of the house can be summed up by saying that the individual house (el-beit) as well as the extended family courtyard dwelling ceased to be the focal point of production activities.

The new peasant individualism generated by emigration, wage labour, market relations, marginality of agricultural activities, individual ownership of land and the considerable change in occupational structure, led to the destruction of the functionality of the extended family. The traditional courtyard dwelling, which once housed a number of extended families, has been replaced by the individual house. These individual houses no longer form a boundary including the central introverted courtyard (hosh) which protected this semi-private domain of the sub-clan from the rest of the village (chapter 4).

Today as figure II.11 shows each house is located in the middle of an individually-owned plot of land, hence breaking away from the traditional pattern of compact juxtaposition of houses. Appendix I illustrates that the majority of newly-constructed houses in the twenties and thirties belonged to a new stratum whose identity was increasingly being defined by their occupation as opposed to their lineage.



Fig. II.11: New houses built in the midst of individually owned land

The Re-ordering of the Inner Space

The most prominent physical indication of breaking away from subsistence agriculture was the disappearance of the three well-integrated domains, i.e., the domains of the fallah, his animals and his agricultural produce (mastabeh, Qa' el beit, and the er-rawieh) from the fallah's house. As figure II.12 demonstrates, houses built in this period (1920-1950) were left only with the fallah's multi-purpose space (el mastabeh). This was normally elevated one or two steps above the entry area. Certain elements such as the fireplace, mud supply bins (khawabi) and mattress niches (kos) were gradually disappearing. This change was not only limited to the newly constructed houses; older houses were also reorganized to serve new functions; inner divisions were demolished; new windows were added and fire places were blocked (fig. II.13).

New houses are not only very different in their spatial organisation from traditional houses, but also have very different contents. The acquisition of modern household items has found its way into both the old and new houses. Modern furniture, iron and wooden beds, cupboards chairs and tables, are bought from the centre town of Ramallah. Most village houses today have acquired a range of modern equipment; radios, televisions, refrigerators, and gas ovens are found in most of the village houses. This acquisition of new items is accompanied by the disposal of all traditional household objects; water jars, old kitchen utensils, mud bins, oil lights, mud ovens (taboons) etc.

However, the break with tradition, and consequently with the traditional house, was made much more explicit in the houses constructed after the 1950s. The traditional single-space house is now replaced by a variety of house types and styles (fig. II.14). Houses constructed since the 1950s are very different in their layout and content. The main characteristic feature of the new houses is the differentiation of spaces within the house according to function; houses now have separate "specialized" spaces. Living room, dining room, bedrooms, verandahs, kitchens, bathrooms, and entry halls, all have made their appearance. Figure II.15 shows

the lay-out of a number of houses constructed in this period. This new differentiation marked the end of differences not only between the dominant Barghouthi and the subordinate fallaheen, but also the end of the specificity of Palestinian rural architectural forms as opposed to the urban cosmopolitan forms (fig. II.16). Today the city has become the "generator" of styles. The rural professionals and peasant elite ape the urban bourgeoisie in a peasant eclectic manner. The differentiation between the two is no longer of peasant and urban culture, but one of class.

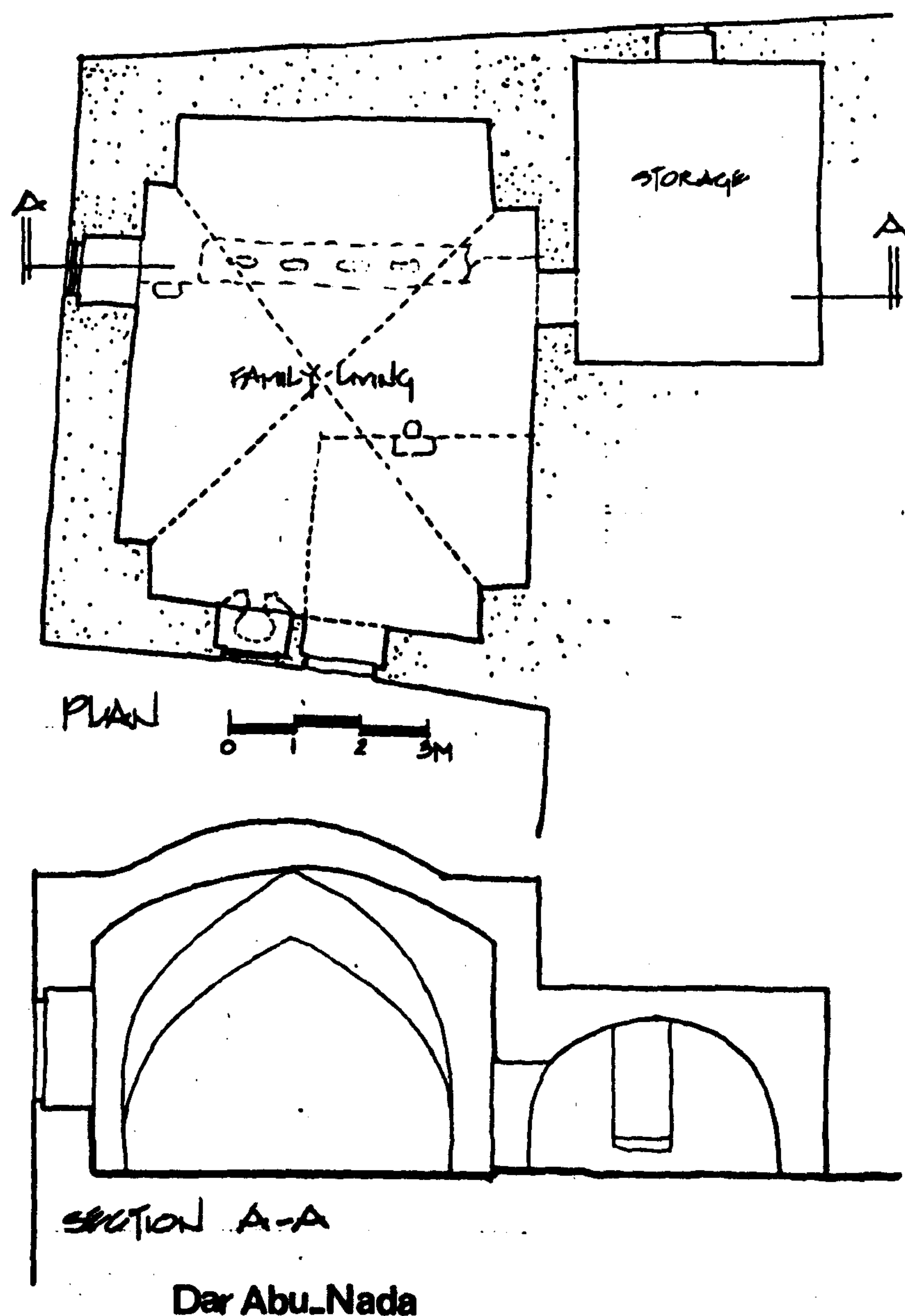


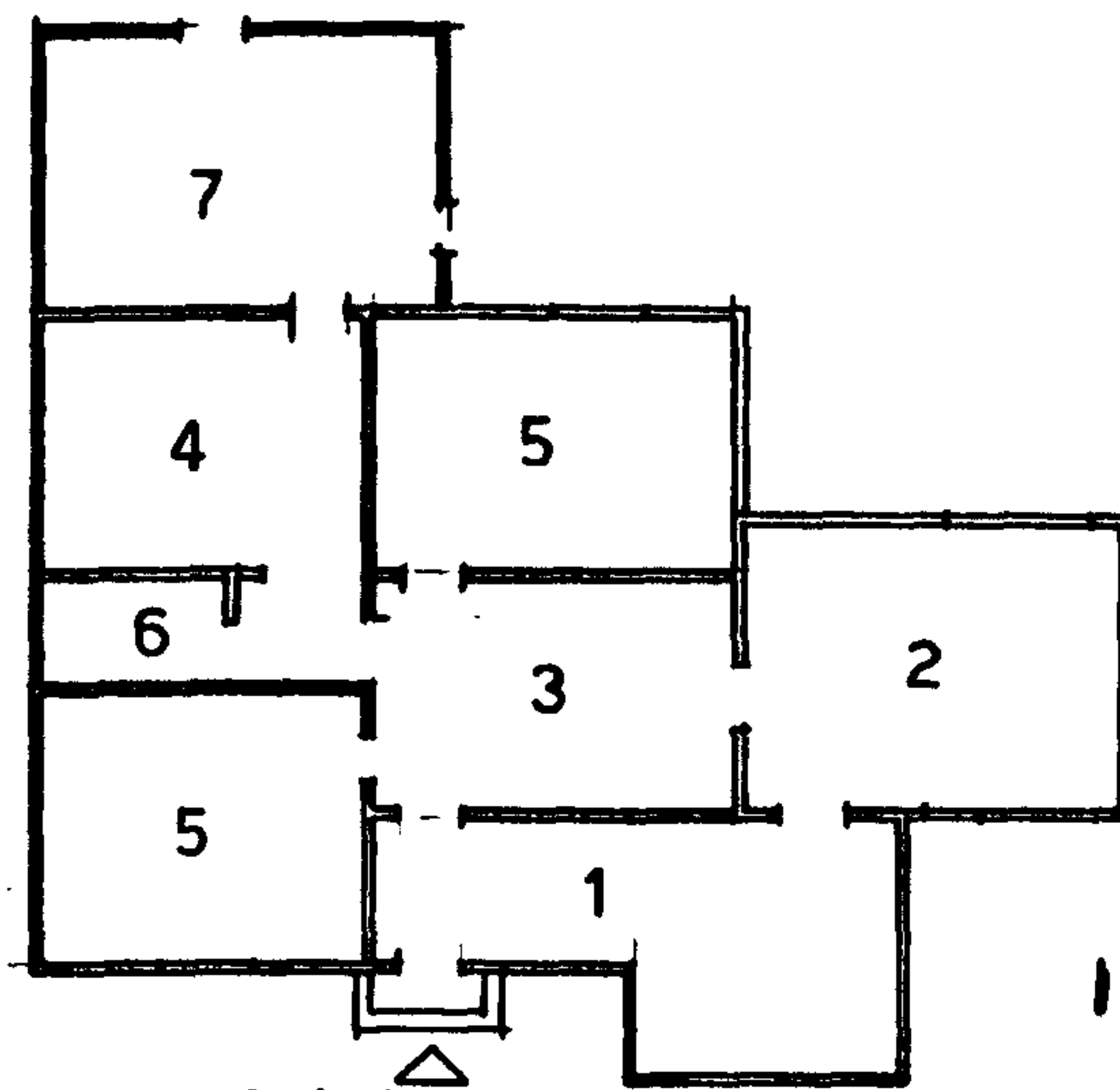
Fig. II.12: The disappearance of animal and agricultural produce areas (qa' el-beit and er-rawieh)



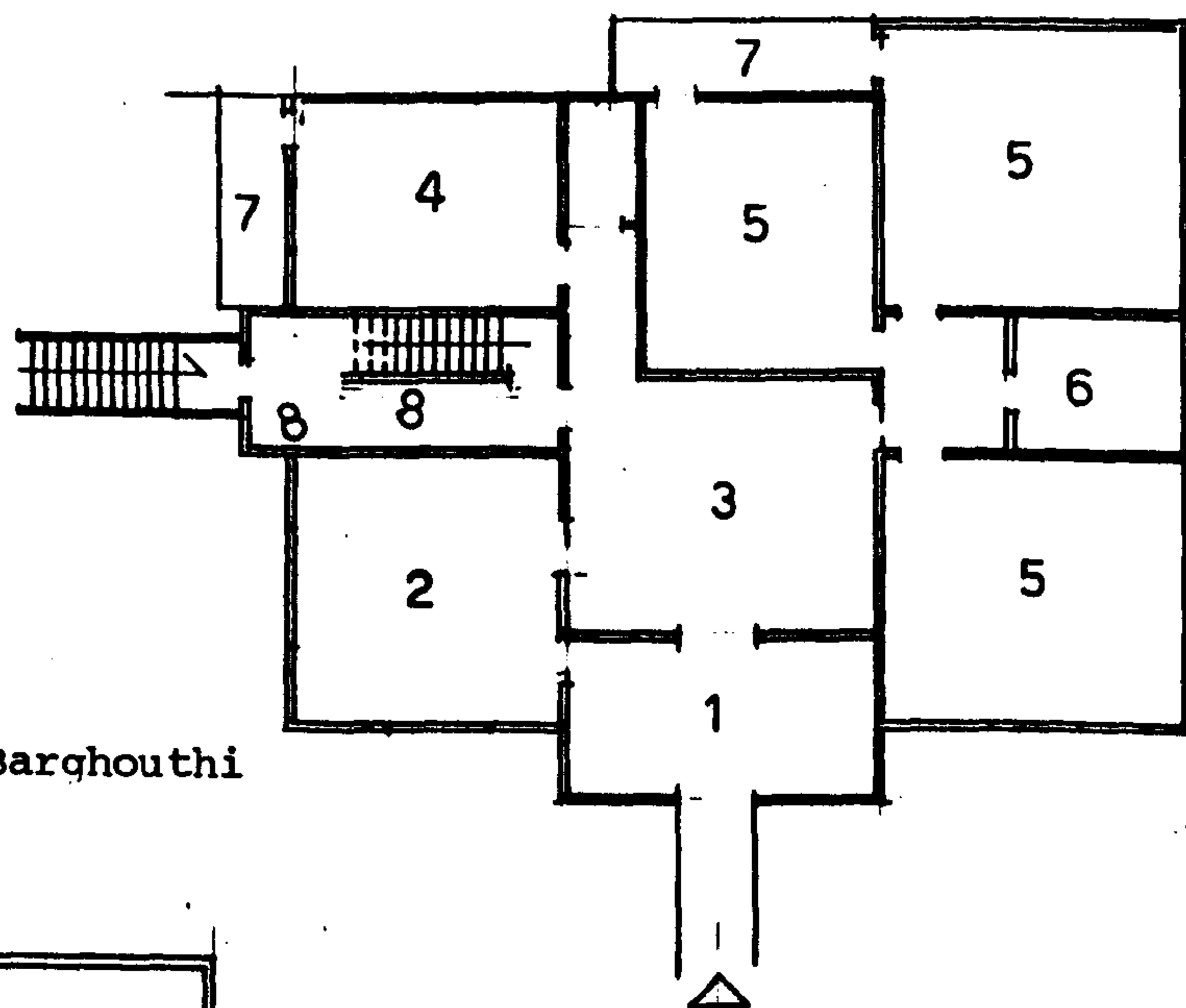
Fig. II.13: Alterations on old houses



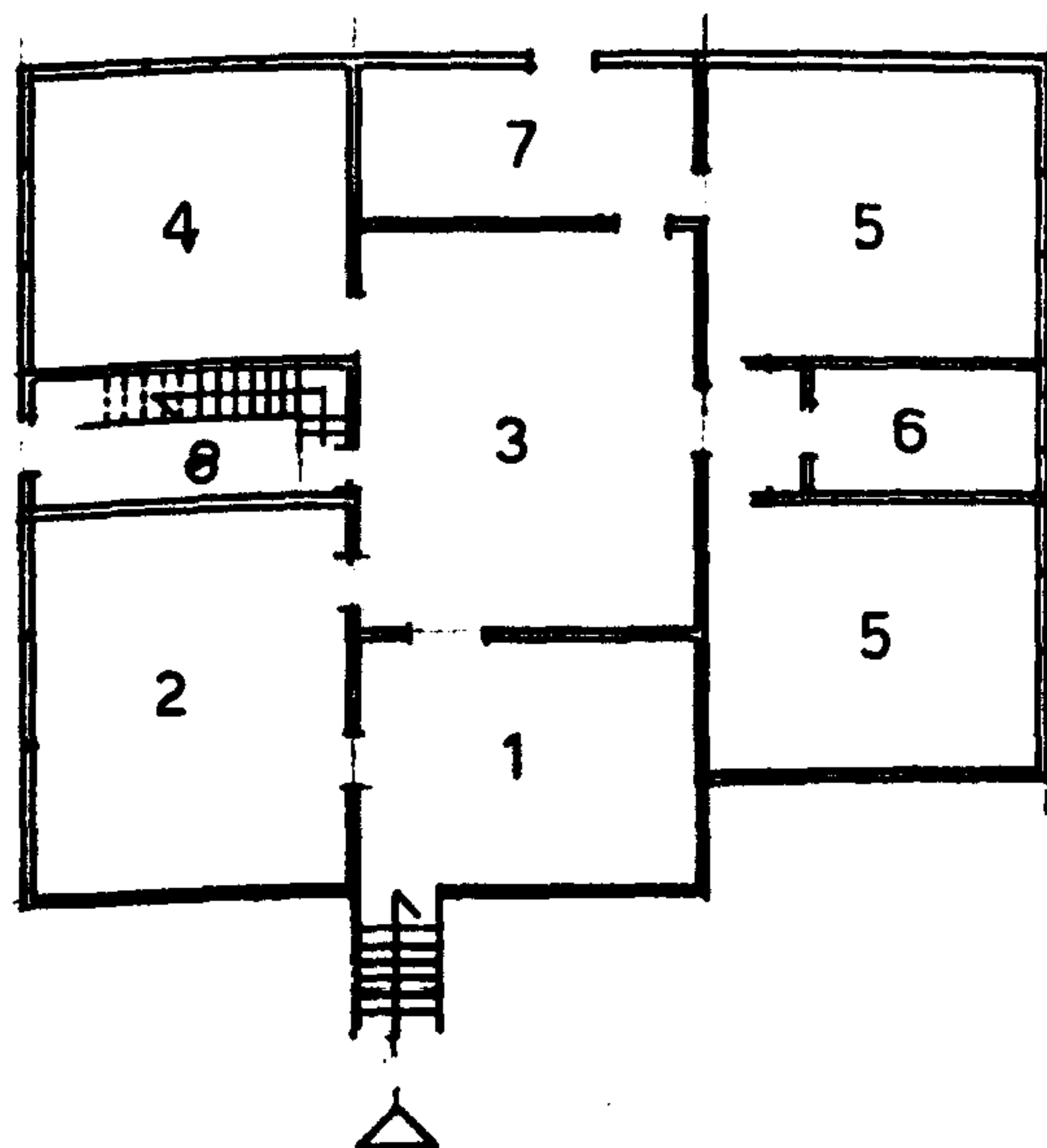
Fig. II.14: Variety of house types and styles



Dar Abdulkarim al-Shu'aibi
(under construction)



Dar Yusef Muhammad al-Barghouthi
1983



Dar Nazih al-Shu'aibi, 1984

KEY

1. glazed veranda
2. guest-room
3. family living room
4. kitchen
5. bedroom
6. bathroom
7. balcony
8. staircase

Fig. II.15: Lay-out of a number of new houses



The wealthy of Deir Ghassaneh
ape the nouveau riche architecture
of the neighbouring district centre
aptly described as Palestina
Vulgaris!!!



A house in the village of Abu Qash



A building in the village
of Surdah



Interior of a house in
Deir Ghassaneh

Fig. II.16: The merger between rural and urban forms

V. Transformation and Persistence in the Building Process; The Commoditisation of the Building Process

As far as the building process is concerned, the transformation of the village community meant the end of the spontaneous process of building and the beginning of the "self-conscious process", to use Alexander's terminology (1964: 33).

The "spontaneous" process of building in the village of Deir Ghassaneh depended on reciprocity between members of the community. Both the construction process, the actual building of the house, as well as the gathering of materials, were carried out by the participation of all members of the extended family. The whole community participated in building the roof (el-a'qdeh) (chapter 4). Reciprocity was expected. Those who helped today expect to be helped tomorrow. However the transformation of reciprocity to a money economy resulted in the commoditisation of both labour and building materials. The transformation in the village occupational structure, and in kinship-based relations, obviously led to the disintegration of the traditional team. Hired labour, as opposed to exchange of labour became the prevailing pattern. People who were members of the traditional team, also were employed hired in other jobs. At the same time, certain individuals such as Abu Najeeb and Abu Kamal became "specialists" for whom house building was their only occupation. The Master-builder (el m'allen) was no longer paid in kind (chapter 4), but was hired with his team of paid labourers to execute the "job". In the 1930s the master-builder Abu Amin, who came from Nablus, was paid half a Palestinian pound a day (the equivalent of one pound sterling). Labourers that accompanied him were paid ten piasters a day. The market economy also marked the end of the traditional role of the master-builder, as a participant in the construction of forms rooted and accepted by the community. He became the specialist, delegated and authorized to create new forms (ibid. 59-63). Building materials which were previously extracted from the immediate environment are now brought from the market.

This new status of building production has left the community

extremely vulnerable and hence exposed to the inducement of new building material and techniques.

Although, as we have seen above, the traditional building process seems to have collapsed, and a new process with a radically new direction to have emerged, one can still see that certain aspects of the old process have persisted. One is the persistence of kinship relations in the new building process. Data gathered from the field show that the execution of new houses is often carried out by a relative. This seems to be true even when more complex and hierarchical organisation is set up to complete the work.

Building rituals also seem to have been more resistant to change. Up until today, both the completion of the foundation, but more important the completion of the roof (el-aqdeh), are celebrated more or less in the same traditional patterns. A big festive meal is served once the concrete mixture that poured the roof leaves the construction site. The usage of symbolic objects which are believed to bring prosperity and good luck such as green branches (particularly olive tree branches), bones, blue beads etc. (chapter 4) is still the same. Inscriptions from the Koran, the name of Allah, the name of prophet Mohammad, in addition to the name of the owner and year of construction, are still carved or painted on a prominent stone (no longer the keystone) usually placed at the front elevation (Fig. II.16).

Today unlike the past, the rituals that have persisted seem to be disembodied from their organic content. They have become little more than mere superstitions whereas in the past they were a meaningful part of a comprehensive ^mcomplex of beliefs and an important element of the sacred environment. The almost ^{total} loss of the sacred environment is best exemplified in the the physical dilapidation of the saints tombs, the holy shrines, and the old mosque as well as in the disappearance of rituals and ceremonies such as the season of the Khawwas saint, i.e., the season of girls (mawsim el-banat). The remaining "fragments" of traditional Palestinian rural architecture no longer belong to a whole.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS:

I have argued here that the change which took place in the physical environment of Deir Ghassaneh should neither be looked at as a rearrangement of the existing structure nor merely a transformation or borrowing of new architectural elements. Rather, such a change in the built environment is seen to have been evidence of the reorganisation of the society as a whole on a new basis.

This change did not initially happen at the architectural level, or in the architectural sphere, but took place first in the socio-economic and cultural spheres, and was eventually reflected in the architectural process.

Obviously, this is not a view on which there is a consensus by architects or architectural critics. In Primitive Architecture Enrico Guidoni argues that:

...wherever there has been extensive contact between primitive communities and Western colonizers... Myths, community organization, and language are all somewhat change-resistant, but architecture has often proved highly sensitive. With the first pressures, important materials and building techniques brought in from outside are promptly adopted. Indeed, an architectural tradition seems to be modified even more hastily than the sociocultural context in which it exists" (Guidoni, 1978:8)

The assumption that the built form changes before the community's socio-cultural content is debatable. This certainly was not the case in the village of Deir Ghassaneh. While critical changes in the cultural conditions started to take place in the early twenties, critical changes in the built form happened much later in the mid-fifties.

Guidoni also suggests that the change in the architectural form could take place "without necessarily implying a total mutation in the social content" (Guidoni, 1978:9). One should perhaps make a distinction between cases whereby people "directly" forced to change their physical environment (natural disasters, wars) and other cases where people were slowly and indirectly changing their environment.

In the case of Deir Ghassaneh we are dealing with a situation in which the lag between critical changes in the socio-cultural conditions, and those in the built environment, are certainly less obvious and probably much more complex than suggested by Guidoni.

I would argue here, that the adoption of a new architectural system could only take place at what I referred to earlier as the "breaking point" of the traditional community. One can perhaps say that, to a great extent, the acceptance or rejection of a new architectural pattern depend on the pre-conditions (socio-cultural) which prevailed in the village community and hence made it possible for a new architectural system to intrude, and ultimately, prevail in the village. Thus the acceptance or rejection of a new architectural system depends more on the antecedent condition of the community rather than on "rational" evaluation of the system. On the contrary, the choice made is often "irrational". This irrationality was, and still is, being manifested in the adoption of systems which proved to be mostly unsuitable for the community which had, willingly or unwillingly, accepted them. For example, the use of concrete houses in semi-arid climate similar to that of Deir Ghassaneh, and the use of houses that open directly to the road in a community where privacy is still highly valued (Fig. II.17) indicates this "irrationality". As far as the economic feasibility of the concrete box, one can argue that it was the disintegration of the traditional building process, exemplified by the commoditisation of labour and building material, and not the market price of the concrete that made it economically feasible. While the great majority of the villagers could afford building a stone house at the turn of the century, only a minority can afford that today. The opposite is also true: any new architectural system would be disregarded by traditional society even though the system may seem to be economical, more suitable for certain climatic conditions, or perhaps seem to be more "rational". The experience of new Gournia designed by Hassan Fathy is a good example of this.

To encapsulate this conclusion I would suggest here a paradigm of causal sequence for the acceptance or rejection of new architectural forms in the following manner:



Fig. II.17: Houses open directly to the **street** in a community where privacy is still highly valued

<u>INITIAL STATE</u>		<u>INTRUSION/DISRUPTION</u>		<u>SYNTHESIS/ADJUSTEMENT</u>
Prevalence of traditional patterns	→	Exposure to external influences leading to strain	→	Adjustments to release strains
Society very vulnerable	→	Loss of values/ undermining of value consensus	→	Acceptance of new patterns

The two countervailing principles of separation and unity that governed the spatial order of the traditional village has been transformed. While in late nineteenth century Deir Ghassaneh, separation along kinship and gender lines took place within the ultimate unity of the village (represented by the patriarchal power of its sheikh and the centrality of the villlage saha (plaza)). The present atomisation of the village identity generated by the peasant individualism is seen in the dispersion of the speparate individual houses along centrefugal forces (linear roads) that connect it to the world outside.

Although as we have seen earlier, separation along kinship ^{lines} ~~still~~ persists in the new village extensions, blood relations no longer dictate the most prominent feature of spatial organisation of traditional Deir Ghassaneh: the division of the village into hierarchical geneological spaces (living quarters (harat)), courtyard dwellings (ahwash), and individual houses (dur). In traditional Deir Ghassaneh, the individual farmer had a communal identity, that is he/she saw himself/herself, and was seen, as a member of a larger group. The peasant habitat was also part of the communal, kinship-based quarter. The economic and social status of the individual was based on the social (spatial) group to which the individual belonged. Increasingly today, social differentiations within the community cut across kinship lines reflecting the new emergent division along class lines, as well as age groupings.

As for lines of gender separation which were based upon clear sexual

division of labour, the breaking down of the extended family and the new occupational identities enhanced the position of women both in agriculture and external job employment. The new division of labour did not of course abolish lines of gender separation but gave them new forms. In 1965, when piped water was connected to the individual houses, women lost the focus of their daily gatherings i.e., the village spring. However visiting patterns, ceremonial occasions such as marriages, and the formal school education are all performed along clear lines of gender separation. The differentiation are no longer between the Barghouthi and the fallaheen women but more between older and younger women in the same family.

Finally, while in traditional Deir Ghassaneh social and spatial divisions were governed by clear rules of unity and separation, increasingly today they are governed by a wide range of individual experiences which are reflected in the loss of communal vocabulary and the intrusions of "foreign" and eclectic local systems that have created a sense of cultural ambivalence very distant from the cohesive village world-view it has superseded.

GLOSSARY OF ARABIC TERMS

(Note: the Arabic participles "al", "el", "er", "et", are equivalent to the English "the", and change their endings according to the word they are prefixed to.)

'ABAIEH: a thick cloak

A'DJAM: saints who shared attributes with demons

AHMADIYEH: forbearing

'AHWASH (sing. hosh): courtyards

'AID (also 'eid): feast

'AIN: spring

'ALALI (sing. 'allieh): elevated room used by wealthier peasants for sleeping and for receiving guests

'AMUMIEH (also 'UMUMIEH): communal; public

'AQD: roof

ARKAN: pillars

'ARUSE: bride

'ATABEH (pl. 'atabat): threshold

'AUNEH: communal help in house construction or harvesting

'AWLIA: saints

BALAD: village or town

BAFTEH: white cloth

BANAT (sing. bint): girls

BANNA (pl. bannaieh): builder

BARAKEH: blessing

BED (also badd): olive press made out of stone

BEIT (pl. buyut): house

BEIT ESH-SHA'R: goat hair tents (bedouin)

BIADER (sing. baydar): threshing floor

BIR: cistern

BUR: uncultivable land

DAKKAK (pl. dakkakin): stone dressers

DAR (pl. door, dur): house; sub-clan

DAWAWIN: see diwan

DIWAN (also liwan): men's reception room

DJABISH: rubble stone

DJINN: supernatural spirits

'EID: see 'aid

ERFA': (verb) lift°

FALLAH (pl. fallaheen): peasant; in this thesis refers to non-Barghuthi peasants

FARAH: lit. joyful occasion; wedding

GHAZU (pl. ghazwat): nomadic raids

GHURABAH (sing. gharib): strangers; outside the lineage

HADITH: traditions of the prophet Muhammad

HADJAR: stone

HAJJ: pilgrimage; also title for the person who makes the pilgrimage

HALAL: permissible by religion (see also haram)

HAM (KHAM): ore (for stones and metals)

HAQ AL-SHUF'A: "right of neighbourhood" (in land purchase)

HARAH/HARET (pl. harat): living quarter in village

HARAM: forbidden by religion (see also hurmah)

HASUD: evil

HAWAKIR: empty lots between houses used for gardening

HILAL (pl. hlalat): lit. crescent; small window

HOSH: see ahwash

HURMAH: sacred or holy; also a woman or wife

ILTIZAM (see also multazim): tax-farming; prebendalism

IMAM: sheikh; community leader in prayer

ISRA': night journey and ascent (of the prophet Muhammad)

JAHA: marriage deputation

JAMA'A: group of people; gathering

JANNA: lit. reaper; bread winner

JARRAH: small water jug

KAIYEM (QAIYEM): caretaker

KANATIR (QANATIR): miniature pillars

KAOS (QAWS): arch; large niche in a wall for storing mattresses
 KARIET KURSI: see qura al karasi
 KHABIEH (pl. khawabi): mud bins for food storage
 KHADEM: male servant
 KHAMIREH: yeast
 KHAN: inn for lodging travellers
 KHARAZEH (pl. KHARAZ): bead
 KHATIB: preacher
 KHIRBEH (pl. khirab): abandoned ancient cites
 KHUWEH (also KHAWAH): protection money
 KHULWAH (pl. khulwat): hermitage
 KISHK: bay window, or projected window
 KSOUR (QSUR) (sing. kasr+qasr): lit. palace; field storage huts
 KUBBEH (QUBBEH): dome
 KUSSAH (QUSSAH): section of the frontyard where herds are kept
 KUTTAB: elementary school run by sheikh for children

 LAYLAT AL-QADR: "the night of the divine decree (in Ramadan)"

 MADAFEH: guest-house
 MA'DOUD: tax collected for the expenses of the guest-house
 MAJIDIEH: Ottoman currency; equiv. to one pound sterling
 MAKAM (MAQAM) (pl. makamat): shrine
 MAKSALEH (MAQSALEH): stone seats on both sides of entry door
 MALAIKEH (sing. malak): angels
 M'ALLEM: master builder; master craftsman
 MANATIR: see ksour
 MARAH: woman; wife; see mahram
 MASTABEH: an elevated platform used as a multi-purpose space
 MAWARIS (sing. maris): strip of land (usually in communal land)
 MAWASIM (sing. mawsim): seasons; festive occasion
 MAWKID (MAWQID): fireplace
 MAZAR: shrine; see also makam
 MEHBASH: mortar made from wood
 MIHRAM: prayer niche in mosque marking the direction of Mecca
 MIKHMAS: iron spoon
 MU'ATHIN: caller to prayer
 MUKHTAR: village headman

MULK: freehold (private) property
 MULTAZIM: tax-farmer
 MUNEH: stored food for house consumption
 MUSHA': communal property
 MUSHAHHAR: striped pink and white stone courses (urban Ottoman architecture)
 MUSLIMEEN: muslims
 MUZARA'A: land acquisition through reclaiming uncultivated land

 NABI: prophet
 NARI: light weight stone
 NATOUR: guard; caretaker
 NAWAR: gypsies
 NIDER (NIDR): vow
 NQOUT: gift given on the occasion of a wedding or house construction

 Q (look for words beginning with 'K')
 QA' EL BEIT: lower part of the house, used for lodging animals
 QUBUR (sing. Qabr): tombs; graves
 QURA AL-KARASI: throne villages

 RAWIEH: food storage area

 SAHA: village plaza
 SALAH (SALAT): prayer
 SHABBEH: alum
 SHAJARAH (SAJARAH): tree, as in shajarat al-haya ("tree of life")
 SHAWAHID: stone tokens left by visitors to saints tombs
 SHAYTAN: satan
 SIDREH: zizyphus tree
 SUNNAH: practices of the prophet (Muhammad)

 TABUN (pl. tawabin): baking oven
 UMMAH (UMMAT): community; nation (Muslims)
 'ULAMA: learned men

 WALI/WELI (pl. awlia): saint
 WAQF: religious endowment

ZAJAL: improvised songs

ZARQA: blue

ZEER: big water jug

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INTERVIEWS

Following are the identification of persons interviewed by the writer:

1. Abu-Adnan, (1984-1986), a prominent member of the Barghouthi clan, from the Dawood sub-clan, age 75.
2. Abu-Hani, (1984-1986), the son of the village school (Kuttab) sheikh, from the 'Alem family, age 77.
3. Abu-Nada, (1984-1986), a prominent member of the Shu'aibi clan, age 85.
4. Abu-Nayef, (1985) recently the Mukhtar of the village from the lower quarter, age 65.
5. Abu-Ziad, (1985) the oldest informant in Deir Ghassaneh, from the Shu'aibi clan, age 96.
6. Abu-Zuhair, (1984), son of the last sheikh of Deir Ghassaneh, age 90.
7. Muysar, (1985-1986), a woman from the Shu'aibi clan, age 48.
8. Um-Ezzat, (1985), an elderly woman originally from the village of Mejdal Sadik, married to a Barghouthi, age 84.

9. Um-Nada, (1985), an elderly woman from the Shu'aibi clan, age 80.
10. Um-Nu'man, (1985), an elderly woman from the Dawood sub-clan age 60.